THE GREATEST BOOKS IN THE WORLD

LAURA SPENCER PORTOR

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THE GREATEST BOOKS IN THE WORLD

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INTERPRETIVE STUDIES

BY

LAURA SPENCER PORTOR

WITH

LISTS OF COLLATERAL READING HELPFUL TO

THE STUDY OF GREAT LITERATURE

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TO FRANCIS POPE

For all books are divisible into two classes, the books of the hour and the books of all time. — Ruskin.

One is sometimes asked . . . to recommend . . . a course of study. My advice would always be to confine yourself to the supreme books in whatever literature. . . . You will find that in order to understand perfectly and exactly any really vital piece of literature, you will be gradually and pleasantly persuaded to studies and explorations of which you little dreamed when you began, and you will find yourselves scholars before you are aware. — Lowell.

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INTRODUCTION

When the average sincere person, wishing to inform himself concerning the world's masterpieces of literature or of any other art, seeks for books which will help him to gain the desired information, he finds a mass of works written by experts, treatises too voluminous and detailed and technical to be of help to the lay reader; or he finds a mass of "get-art-quick" books in which, in a perfunctory, guidebook fashion, he has pointed out to him the masterpieces he is expected to admire, with dates, a few guidebook facts, and now and then an anecdote or two as a means of lightening the general dullness. When he comes to look for a volume that shall treat seriously but not too seriously, interestingly but not too lightly, of the masterpieces of literature or sculpture, or any other great art, he finds such volumes, like angels' visits, very few and far between. Indeed, while there are a great many excellent text and reference books and a great many learned treatises on all the arts, and a goodly number of more or less light treatises on literature, I know of no volume which, while dealing particularly with the masterpieces of

literature, yet gives the reader at the same time a clear and connected survey of them in their relation both to literature and life, which will enable him to know why these are called masterpieces — and to accept them as such for himself.

What most of us need, I take it, is a book, sound in its treatment, by means of which we may readily and intelligently inform ourselves concerning the world's masterworks of literature, not as mere detached forms but as part of a great whole, a great art whose history and development are inwoven with the history and development of mankind; a book not dogmatic but one which rather will help us to discover and interpret some of the beauty of these masterpieces and will lead us to form our own opinions concerning them.

If the present volume, meeting this need, shall become a help to those interested in its subject; if by this means it shall add somewhat to their enjoyment of literature, I shall not regret that it is not called a scholarly, but rather, in the broadest sense, a popular discussion of the world's greatest books.

A further word is perhaps needed concerning the author's choice of the books here discussed.

From time to time there have been attempts to make a fairly comprehensive list of the "best

books of the world." Eminent men have consented to name what they believe to be the five, ten, twenty, or one hundred "best books." Such lists are generally more fruitful of dispute than they are convincing.

It is not intended in the present volume to make or urge any arbitrary selection of "best books." The masterpieces chosen are seven in number. In each case they are books concerning whose greatness there is no dispute; all of them are widely admitted to be among the greatest books in the world.

Nor is the order in which these books stand in this volume intended to relate to their degrees of greatness. Each is studied merely with a view to a better understanding of the book itself, with the idea of discovering and realizing some of the reasons which underlie its lasting greatness.

In the present choice of famous great books, one is notably absent. But to those who may wonder why the Bible is not among the books chosen, it will, on reflection, be clear that it could not fairly be included in the present list. The Bible is not one book, but a collection of many books; not one example of genius or revelation, but practically an entire literature. That it would not as a whole fall in with the general

plan of study followed in this volume is obvious. Even a small portion of it, the Book of Job, which takes rank with the greatest books, is here dealt with all too briefly and inadequately.

THE GREATEST BOOKS
IN THE WORLD

THE GREATEST BOOKS IN THE WORLD

CHAPTER I

OUR HERITAGE

It is a truth which needs no arguing that one who is with all certainty to inherit a vast fortune should be carefully and wisely trained with that fact in view; should be taught no little concerning the value and use and meaning of wealth; should be taught, not less, a respect for that importance and influence and place among his fellows which his inheritance will one day give him. He should, we concede, be taught ably to handle his own fortune, and warned against leaving the investing and spending of it in the hands of others who cannot have his interests sufficiently at heart. He should, with all this in view, be taught discretion and trained in judgment, so as to be able in time to make his own wise choice between good and evil, between wise and unwise. Thus his future will lay an admitted obligation even on his early life; and, from the first, he shall be trained in body and mind and

somewhat, no doubt, in spirit for that larger responsibility which the years will deliver into his hands.

Yet in a curiously similar case — similar save that the fortune in this case is not merely vast but incalculably vast — many of us are not yet awake to the necessity of training the individual in such a way that he may be a wise, not an unwise, inheritor. And if it be pointed out to us that that individual is yourself or myself, we are perhaps so little trained to a knowledge of our vast possessions that our first sensation is one of surprise; and our first mental act is to assure ourselves that here is some mistake, — we are not heirs to an immense fortune, this we would swear to. We are, rather, the mere average man or woman without present or future prospect of great wealth.

This is what you and I would very likely answer, and not only we but thousands of others if we were suddenly confronted with the fact that we are inheritors of fortunes to which that of the wealthiest of men is, when all is said and done, a mere pittance.

I say "fact," for here is indeed no metaphor or supposition, but a fact plain and simple. Each newcomer in the world, as he is reaching years of maturity, becomes gradually aware, or should

become aware, of a great wealth, a vast inheritance bequeathed him by the race of which he is a scion; a stupendous fortune accumulated through countless ages and intended and offered for his enjoyment and benefit, here and now.

Not only do most of us come to our inheritance unprepared; but a great number of us are not fitted, even to the last of our days, either to understand, first, what our fortune may be, or to use it wisely for our own benefit and the benefit of others.

Most of us, it is true, gain at one time or another — generally when we are young, and perhaps on windy, sunny mornings in spring, when the blood runs red — a mysterious, exhilarating sense of riches all about us, no matter how worldly poor we ourselves may be; a subtle, persistent sense of the world's unlimited, inexhaustible riches; but few of us think of them as our own particular inheritance, and few of us set about claiming them and using them as Siegfried claimed and forged and used that magic sword long kept from him.

We hear talk of the "mines of Golconda," of the "wealth of the Indies," of the "gold of King Midas," of the "hoards of the Nibelungs," but these stand to us as fables. And all the while,

over yonder beyond our intelligence and our schooling, lie riches which the toiling hands of all the men and women in the world shall never carry away, nor the devices of the minds of all men ever wholly spend or exhaust. To these treasures, so little appreciated by us, we hear, as we go on, frequent reference. We stumble on vague knowledge of them as we read books or meet with cultivated people, or view a great city in the dawn, or come for the first time under the spell of memorable music. In occasional touch with richer lives than our own we gain hints of countries we have not explored, hear speech of certain Princes of the Earth whose provinces are strange to us; we catch the names of Homer, Phidias, Raphael, Michelangelo. We hear mention of the "Odyssey," of "Hamlet," of the dramas of Æschylus, of Sophocles; of the Madonna "Granduca," of the "Parthenon," the "Sistine Chapel," "Nike of the Sandal," of the "Taj Mahal," and "Temples of Karnak." We are envious of a knowledge of these things, we wonder about them, speculate about them, would gladly inform ourselves concerning them, if we could; we perhaps deplore and are a little ashamed of our provincial lives, and of our stay-at-home intelligence which has so rarely put to sea. There are all these things to know;

they are known to more traveled minds than ours, and we are in the main ignorant of them.

But as a matter of fact these are only a small part of the riches left to us in fee simple.

We are possessed of a vast fortune, that in time becomes clear; but we have not been trained or fitted either to the understanding of it or the use of it. Many of our possessions lie in foreign lands; but our lives speak only one language, as it were; or we are limited to the narrow province of our own experience. We are in the position of a man who, without previous education, finds himself on coming of age to be one of the richest men in the world, and knows not what to do with his riches.

And what follows? Generally speaking either our wealth is locked away from us all our days, usurped by others better fitted than ourselves to use it; or, because of our dullness, our lack of training, we use it unwisely and with little taste, as that class known as the *nouveaux riches* use their newly acquired riches, with a certain blundering and awkwardness. Or else — and this is the happiest chance — there awakens in us a great longing to know more concerning our inheritance, a curiosity which will not be gainsaid or denied. We determine to put off from the shore of our own limited experience, to sail

somewhat the unlimited seas, to explore some of those foreign lands which await us and of which we have heard report.

Generally this curiosity and this determination come between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three, although they may, of course, come earlier; and to some they do come later, entirely according as circumstances and environment hasten or retard them. This experience may be described as a kind of efflorescence of the mind resulting from an unconscious but growing desire to create in one's self a sort of secondary beauty by means of a fuller knowledge and appreciation of all that the world calls beautiful.

At such a time the intelligence and the emotions may leap enthusiastically to the acceptance of any great form of beauty, whether the form be fully understood or not. It is a common thing, for instance, to find the mind and emotions at such a time accepting as beautiful, and with an almost overwrought enthusiasm, such great art forms as the "Venus de Milo," the "Apollo Belvedere," "Tristan and Isolde," "Lohengrin," "Faust," etc., etc. These immediately exert an influence over us, they directly affect us, and begin already to mould us. We find ourselves able to talk of them; we enthuse over them; we feel them, so to speak; and

we rejoice, and believe ourselves honestly appreciative of great art; and in a measure we are.

But while all this is as it should be, it is by no means sufficient. The influence we feel falls short, indeed, of that broader, less emotional, and more intellectual influence of all great art, that influence which comes only with a more intellectual and less emotional understanding and enjoyment of art. While the great and familiar forms that we have named rouse us and accomplish their purpose in us, yet we find, perhaps, that certain others, reputed equally great, fail to move us. The "Theseus" of the Parthenon; the "Torso" of the Vatican; the "Three Fates" of the East Pediment; the "Lemnian Athena"; the Russian Symphonies of Tschaikowsky; the "Requiem Mass" of Bach; the "Divine Comedy"; these bewilder us and leave us unstirred. We are not prepared to like these great forms. Yet there they are, unquestionably great, a very present rebuke to the slenderness of our knowledge. In other words, we have sailed the seas to some purpose, it would seem; have known that joy, at last, of discovering land lying low on the horizon; have attained to it and made it ours, with no little thankfulness; but there are still vast stretches lying in the interior of our

newly discovered countries which our feet have not yet traveled.

If we are to enjoy not merely some few given forms of art but art itself, not only some examples of beauty but beauty, we shall have need to go deeper than a mere superficial and popular study of a few given art forms; we shall have need to explore and to learn to judge somewhat of art for ourselves.

CHAPTER II

ON JUDGING OF GREAT BOOKS

It is not possible to lay down any laws to which the varied manifestations of beauty in life or art will inevitably conform; nor can beauty be so exactly defined that, having got the definition by heart, we can recognize the quality by applying the definition. No touchstone of taste can be found, even by the most zealous, whereby we may know infallibly the great and separate it from the less great. There are, of course, many opinions to help us form our own. Many people before us have examined and studied our great art forms and have recorded their opinions of them; men better equipped than ourselves have judged and passed sentence; yet it is not entirely from these that we shall learn to appreciate great art.

Ruskin tells us that to use books rightly is to be led by them into a wider sight and purer conception than our own; to receive from them "the united sentence of the judges and councils of all time against our solitary and unstable opinion."

While this is sound in a measure, it is incom-

plete; it leaves out of account the value of what he calls our unstable opinion. For our opinion has, indeed, a value which lies not so much in the character of the opinion itself, perhaps, as in the fact that it is our own. Our opinion of any work of art, if that opinion is truly our own, results from our individual response to the beauty or power contained in that particular form of art. A great book, for instance, produces on us a certain effect; our translation of that effect into ideas, words, and opinions of our own, is of some value. To be of an open mind, receptive of beauty, to be desirous of it, affected by it, responsive to it, — here is the beginning of all criticism and appreciation of any art form whatsoever.

In a few beautiful paragraphs in his preface to the "Renaissance," Pater speaks of this, our personal relation to art, and notes the value of it. He urges that not only is it essential to the understanding and realization of beautiful art forms to "see the object as in itself it really is," but it is further essential to know one's own impression of any given art form, to "discriminate" this impression, "to realize it distinctly." This is, of course, but another way of saying that we are not to follow blindly another's opinions, but are to have an opinion of our own; we are

to analyze and "realize" the impression made on ourselves by the work of art; we are to read, if it be literature, or see, if it be sculpture or painting, or listen, if it be music, thinkingly and realizingly. With clear insight he points out that "music, poetry, artistic and accomplished forms of human life . . . possess, like the products of nature, so many virtues and qualities."

(That great form of architecture and art which we call the Taj Mahal, for instance, is as a cup holding a different wine and a quite different "virtue" from that held by the art form known as the "Divine Comedy," the "Venus de Milo." A realizing sense must come, first of all, then, of this distinction, this "virtue" and "quality," and then a realizing sense of the effect of this "virtue" and "quality" on ourselves.)

"What is this song or picture, this engaging personality presented in life or in a book, to *me?* What effect does it really produce on me? Does it give me pleasure? and if so, what sort or degree of pleasure? How is my nature modified by its presence and under its influence?"

(The lover and seeker after beauty and he who would study intelligently any of its forms feels the peculiar influence of beauty and strives to realize that influence, and interpret it to

himself; strives to translate, as it were, his impression into the language of ideals.)

"To him the picture, the landscape, the engaging personality in life or in a book, 'La Gioconda,' the hills of Carrara, Pico of Mirandola, are valuable for their virtues, as we say in speaking of an herb, a wine, a gem; for the property each has of affecting one with a special, a unique, impression of pleasure."

Pater goes further to say that "our education becomes complete in proportion as our susceptibility to these impressions increases in depth and variety"; and there might be added, what is inferred, in proportion as our realization of these impressions augments.

In our study of great books, then, it were well to remember that each of the books studied has a "quality," a "virtue," a personality of its own; it were wise to realize this quality and to note its effect on ourselves.

Analytic studies of great books are valuable; scholarly treatises on the meaning and intent of the author is of help; elucidation of difficult passages is necessary, perhaps, to a complete understanding of the work; but these alone are but as a valley of dry bones, until there is breathed into them that fine spirit of personal interpretation which gives life and meaning to

the whole. The present studies of great books do not pretend to be either exhaustive or complete. They are meant, rather, to be suggestive. Being in themselves interpretive it is hoped they will suggest and stimulate further interpretation on the part of the reader and so enable him to come into a more personal relationship with the forms of art here treated of. Those who wish to carry their studies further will find helpful many of the volumes mentioned in the lists of collateral reading.

It should not be forgotten that the several books here written of are so many *forms* of a great art, and that each form is in itself worthy of extended study. It should be noted that each form differs much from the others. One is clearly classic, another mediæval and wrought with many a strange device; still another is like a cup overlaid with delicate tracery and arabesque. The form, the *touch*, as it were, of each will be an experience of exquisite pleasure to the sensitive and discriminating hand. Yet, while we should be sensitive to the beauty of the form, it should be remembered that these books are as cups wrought to hold that more precious wine of man's knowledge, pressed from what varied fruit of experience, in what diverse climes and under what different skies of chance. To taste

that wine, to "discriminate" it, to judge somewhat of the flavor and "virtue" of it for ourselves, and to apprehend — subtly distilled in it, and with a special meaning for us — the sunshine and storm, the winds and rains, the growth and stress, and patience and distillation of hope and beauty which went in ages gone to the making of it, — this should be the task, and will be the pleasure, of all those who study thinkingly and realizingly the world's great books.

CHAPTER III

GREAT WRITERS AS INTERPRETERS

The writer like the painter is an interpreter rather than a creator. He selects and interprets and reveals. He takes from the mass of human experience such things as seem to him especially noteworthy, or beautiful or proven true. These he sets before us in certain relations; to these he calls our attention; and, in whatever form pleasing to himself, shows us or interprets for us their meaning. However great he may seem to be in himself, he is great only as he interprets greatly human experience, not as it has been known to himself only, but as it has been tested and tried and proven by thousands since the world began.

The ages lie immediately back of every great book. Before Ulysses could set sail for Troy to redeem with other kings his promise of loyalty, thousands of other men, in ages past, had sailed the seas and redeemed their promises as faithfully. Before Ulysses set his wandering sails hopefully toward home, countless others, unnamed, in the glimmering distant ages had turned white faces homeward, hopefully, and dreamed of wife and children and welcome

hearth. Before Ulysses deafened his companions' ears to the fatal voices of the sirens and had himself bound with cords that he might not yield to their sweetness, and often — before he forbore to taste of the lotos — others, long dead and as brave and wise as he, had fortified themselves against temptation not less, and had resisted the allurement of dreams, to take up, instead, the active toil of difficult life. Before Ulysses ever came and strove and despaired and hoped again, and attained at last, men as many as the stars of the heavens had striven and done battle; had been struck down and had risen again; and had grasped at last, for a little time of respite, and after much suffering, the dear rewards of life.

We think of the creator of Ulysses as Homer; we think of his father as Laertes; but in reality the father of Ulysses is human suffering, and his mother the ages of the world; and but for the thousands of men and women who had gone before, testing life, pitting their strength against life's natural forces, failing and succeeding and out of these attaining to knowledge and wisdom, but for these, Ulysses would never have been.

For the whole background of art and the source of all literature is human experience. The poet but selects from this experience this or that. Let me repeat that he has originated

nothing. He has at the best but "discriminated" and interpreted and been a voice and mouthpiece for some of those enacted truths so far greater than himself.

This same thing has been said often enough before. But it should be realized newly by every one who has a desire or love for art in any form. Plato, in the dialogue between Ion and Socrates, observed it when he said: "The poets are only the interpreters of the gods, by whom they are severally possessed." It is only another way of saying that the great underlying experiences and truths of life "possess" the poet and find in him a tongue and a language. Moses was in this sense a poet as well as a prophet, interpreting to his people the meanings of the Most High.

Browning calls attention to the interpretive office of the painter, similar in all essentials to that of the poet, when in the person of Lippo Lippi, he says: —

> We're made so that we love
> First when we see them painted, things we have passed
> Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;
> And so they are better, painted — better to us,
> Which is the same thing. *Art was given for that,*
> *God uses us to help each other so,*
> *Lending our minds out.*

This, too, of Carlyle, when he speaks of the poet and the poet's office: —

He [the poet] is to reveal that to us — that sacred mystery which he more than others lives ever present with. . . . Whosoever may live in the shows of things, it is for him a necessity of nature to live in the very fact of things.

Nor is the poet less but greater by the fact that he is a revealer and interpreter rather than what we are wont to call an originator. We call original, generally, people who are distinguished by peculiar and different and extraordinary views and opinions; but the great poet is distinguished by no such things. He deals, rather, in the familiar and universal. He does not interpret or reveal what is peculiar either to himself or to any one person or sect, but he interprets rather the usual, the human, the daily, God's great commonplaces. And though he gives a particular name to his hero, look close and you will find that hero to be not Ulysses, or Faust, or Christian, — but *mankind.* Homer does not lose but is the greater by this, that Ulysses is his brother in the human race rather than a mere ethereal creation of his fancy. Dante is the greater because his "Divine Comedy" is not built from airy imaginings, but is constructed from the bottom up of human sins and human sufferings, human rewards which he saw and sensed and observed in the very materials of

human life, and called their names "Hell" and "Purgatory" and "Paradise."

This broader conception of the poet's office as interpreter rather than originator is necessary to a broad understanding of the world's great books. We should understand once for all that it is life itself that all great poets are interpreting for us, and that it is life itself that we shall better understand in reading and understanding any great book.

CHAPTER IV

THE WRITER'S MESSAGE

It is obvious that a poet can interpret for us not all of life, only life in part. It is of interest, therefore, to note what part or parts of life the poet selects. It is presumable he will select that which has impressed him most strongly, some truth and beauty to which he has especially responded and responded perhaps most often. It is not unlikely he will choose from the general experience of humanity those experiences to which his own are most akin. The sorrows or joys he tells of, and the spiritual truths he sets out, are likely to be those to which his own joys and sorrows and wisdom are closely allied.

Hence, while great art is never drawn from personal sources, yet it is intricately inwoven with the artist's personality; some touch of himself is in it. He has interpreted this and not that phase of human experience. The selection is his; the selection glows with his personality, and so conveys his rather than another's message. Homer has one message, Goethe another; yet both draw for their facts from the same great source—life itself and human experience.

As we study the matter carefully it is interesting to note that the message of all great books, however widely these books may differ, is rooted in some moral conception of the author. No one can look deeply into life without coming upon what we take to be its underlying moral purposes; and poets look into life very deeply. Even Goethe, who contended that "the Beautiful is higher than the Good," adds that the Beautiful includes in it the Good. However we may gauge any of the great books by standards of æsthetics and find them beautiful, we shall have to admit, as Goethe did, that there, too, the Beautiful includes in it the Good.

Carlyle, in his "Heroes and Hero Worship," notes that the calling of the Prophet, the Man of God, — the man, that is, who speaks to the people of God, — and that of the Poet, — the man who speaks to the people of life and human experience, — merge into one. Both "have penetrated into the sacred mystery of the Universe. . . . The Prophet, we might say, has seized that sacred mystery rather on the moral side as Good and Evil, Duty and Prohibition; the . . . Poet on what the Germans call the æsthetic side, as Beautiful and the like. The one we may call a revealer of what we are to do, the other of what we are to love." Then follows this,

significantly: "*But indeed these two provinces run into one another and cannot be disjoined.*"

We may read any great book for the beauty of it, but we cannot read it earnestly without coming also on the *goodness* of it, without discovering in it some large moral and spiritual revelation; something that speaks to the spirit of us. And it is in this selection and revelation of moral and spiritual truth, even more than in his selection and revelation of physical and material loveliness, that we come face to face with the author. This is the truth that was known and dear to *him*, this the universal spiritual fact most intricately inwoven with his own spiritual experience. Others may show us other truths, but this particular truth he shows us, reveals to us better than another; Homer one, Goethe another, Job another.

And each truth is beautiful and each different and each precious. "The first foundation was jasper; the second sapphire; the third a chalcedony; the fourth an emerald."

And beyond all these truths so precious we apprehend some larger and immortal truth, some hoped for and more splendid and final revelation which these, glorious as they are, do but wall and shut away from our yet unready eyes.

CHAPTER V

THE ODYSSEY

The good master [Virgil] began to say: "Mark him with that sword in hand, who precedes the three even as their lord. That is Homer, the sovereign Poet."

DANTE, *The Inferno.*

As one that for a weary space has lain
Lulled by the song of Circe and her wine
In gardens near the gate of Proserpine,
Where that Ægean isle forgets the main,
And only the low lutes of love complain,
And only shadows of wan lovers pine,
As such a one were glad to know the brine
Salt on his lips and the large air again —
So gladly, from the songs of modern speech
Men turn and see the stars, and feel the free
Shrill wind beyond the close of heavy flowers,
And through the music of the languid hours
They hear like ocean on a western beach
The surge and thunder of the Odyssey.

ANDREW LANG.

"HOMER the first and greatest of the poets . . . a poet for all ages, all races, all moods." It is so that a noted student of Homer in our own day writes of the author of the "Odyssey."

We have few facts concerning Shakespeare, and Shakespeare died a little less than three hundred years ago. We have few, indeed, concerning Homer, who died, it is reckoned, three thousand and more years ago. We are wont to think of the "Great Age" of Greece — the age,

that is, of Phidias, Æschylus, and Pericles — as the very heart of ancient classic times; yet the age of Homer, and, older still, the time of which he writes, antedate this by more than twice as many centuries as Shakespeare's age antedates our own age. Notwithstanding this the name of Homer towers still among the greatest of the world to-day; and though we are without authentic knowledge of his life and history, we find him moving among the most famous of the earth — a personality of persistent greatness.

There are, it is true, eminent scholars and earnest students who contend that the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" are not the works of any one man but of many; who insist there was no personal Homer, as we have supposed; but the world in general continues to believe that there lived, about twelve centuries before the coming of Christ, one Homer, or Homerus, a Greek, blind, it is said, who saw life with a poet's eyes, sang of it with a poet's tongue and interpreted it with a poet's heart in the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," the two greatest epics the world has known.

THE PERSONALITY OF HOMER

If we look to his writings for some revelation of the man, we find every evidence that Homer

had a broader and deeper experience of life than comes to most men. Sorrow and separation and peril and glory; a life of peace, as well as the fortunes of war; these, we think, he must have known; gentle, reverent, keenly observant of life, wise, — these we think he must have been; a man, no doubt, like all great poets, above the age in which he lived; traveled, we suppose; acquainted with all classes; at home alike, as we think Shakespeare would have been, in the courts of princes or huts of swineherds; a careful and interested and delighted beholder of nature; a watchful and understanding observer of human nature and human events. He writes of "manliness, courage, reverence for old age and for the hospitable hearth; of justice, piety, pity, brave attitude toward life and death. . . . He delights in the joy of battle and in all the movements of war. Yet he delights not less, but more, in peace; in prosperous cities, hearths secure; in the tender beauty of children, in the love of wedded wives, in the frank nobility of maidens, in the beauty of earth and sky and sea."

The things which Homer takes from the great mass of human experience, which he observes and selects and interprets and reveals, are many and varied.

In the "Iliad" and "Odyssey," as in life itself,

customs come and go, men live and die, kingdoms rise and fall, but the great humanities remain and recur, inextricably interwoven; sorrow, joy, virtue, human effort, man's sense of duty, justice, loyalty, honor, endurance, man's right of conquest, his perpetual desire for knowledge, his love of home and kindred, these, as in life, remain, while the individual history moves and alters. As in life they are a kind of immortality in the midst of man's mortality, a sort of permanency at the very center of all change, a something sure on which to base all that is lasting in our knowledge, and on which to build all that is permanent in our faiths; so here in these two great epics they are a permanency in the midst of all the changing happenings of the story; a kind of lasting humanity in the midst of fickle fortunes and inconstant chance. It is these above all that Homer observes, selects, interprets for us.

It is generally admitted as one of the requirements of great art that it shall have that quality which, for lack of a better word, we call democracy; that it shall be not for any small or restricted class, but that it shall be for and of the people. The "Odyssey" meets this requirement. Homer is one with the people, the "Odyssey" is for and of them, a thing "for all races, all moods."

When we study the "Odyssey" for itself, quite apart from its relation to its author, we find it in all its coloring and detail essentially Greek; a brilliant survival in literature of an old and wonderful civilization which had, we believe, sprung up and flowered and withered twelve or fifteen centuries, perhaps more, before the star of the Wise Men shone over Bethlehem.

As we to-day look back to the times of Arthur, to the age of chivalry, as to times of particular romance separated from our own day by a kind of golden mist of tradition and by a mellowed charm of half-real, half-legendary happening, so the Greeks of the Great Age in Greece — five hundred years before Christ — looked back, no doubt, to that still earlier Heroic Age as to a time of golden romance; looked back to the days of Achilles and Ulysses and their companions, when kings warred and conquered and built cities for their friends, and lived loyally, and went seeking high adventure among the broken islands and wandering waters of Greece; looked back to a time when, pledged to a kind of royal brotherhood not unlike the brotherhood of the Round Table, their gathered galleys smote the sea with rhymed oars, and the hearts of heroes and chiefs of the land and those of

their companions beat in unison to one loyal purpose.

The War of Troy from which the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" are drawn, was on the Greek side a war of united friendship, personal friendship in the good golden days when such a personal friendship on so large a scale was possible; when a hundred kings and chiefs pledged one king their loyalty and left home and country and all that was dear to them to endure war and suffering for ten long years toward the fulfilling of their pledge.

Life then was on a generous scale, was less detailed and far more simple. If in that golden age there was more, also, than the mere symbol of gold, if the actual metal itself overlaid thickly the pillars of kings' houses, there was, too, it seems, something golden and precious in man's mettle, and life itself had less alloy.

William Morris, in the first lines of his "Sigurd the Volsung," has described an age something like it, but in a less sunny, less favorable land. Here, too, is pictured an age when something golden and worthy clung about the humblest measures of life, when the great men of the land were the great *doers*, and the noblest women, too, rendered noble the humblest service, when they lent their hands to the weaving, the

washing, and the strewing of the floors with rushes.

There was a dwelling of kings ere the world was waxen old;
Dukes were the door-wards there, and the roofs were thatched with gold;
Earls were the wrights that wrought it, and silver nailed its doors;
Earls' wives were the weaving-women, queens' daughters strewed its floors.

To those who have read the "Odyssey" these opening lines of "Sigurd the Volsung" ring familiar. The description calls to mind the "dwellings" of those kings — Menelaus, Alcinous, Odysseus. Here is a kind of primitive romance, and a chivalry of such an order as to make the later chivalry and romance of our own Middle Ages seem somewhat bedecked, a little tricked-out, something perhaps less sincere, certainly less frank and sunny.

If we take merely the outline of the story of the Trojan War itself, we get at once into the heart of an old and classic and sunlit romance that shines brightly across our darker or more dim, less colored, ages. Where, in all later history, shall we find such a war waged and for such a woman. Where could we turn to match the matchless Helen and that

face that launched a thousand ships
And burned the topless towers of Ilium.

Though the "Odyssey" relates mainly the events subsequent to the Trojan War, and is concerned with Ulysses' return from Troy, yet to enter fully into the spirit of it one must have in mind the main facts of the Trojan War itself and must know of Helen who caused that war.

Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world, was wooed by many of the Greek chiefs. That they might not quarrel for her among themselves, and that she might be more safe and free in her selection of a husband, all these promised to uphold her choice, agreeing that after it was made they would, if ever need came, unite in her defense. Her choice fell on Menelaus. But somewhat later Paris, son of the King of Troy, visiting the palace of Menelaus, stole away Helen into captivity with the aid of Aphrodite, whose favorite he was. The princes and kings of Greece, therefore, rallied to the aid of Menelaus. Each brought not his own services merely, but ships and companions; so that the Greek armament launched against Troy consisted of more than a thousand vessels, and it is reckoned a hundred thousand Greeks embarked on the famous expedition. After ten years of siege Troy was conquered, but not without the loss of many Trojan and Greek heroes. Helen was restored at last to Menelaus, and they and the

surviving Greek chiefs turned their faces toward home. But though the others reached home in safety, much suffering and long delay befell Ulysses. After fearful adventures and hardships, during which his ship companions all met death, Ulysses was at last cast, shipwrecked, on the island of the sea nymph Calypso. Calypso became enamored of him, and despite his longing to return to Ithaca, his home, she detained him with her for seven long years.

The "Odyssey" opens just as the seven years are drawing to a close. The story, briefly told, might read as follows: —

THE STORY OF THE ODYSSEY

Early in those days when the pagan deities held sway in Greece, the gods were assembled in heaven to discuss matters of import, and among others the fate and affairs of man, man the presumptuous. For was he not, indeed, presumptuous, often blaming the deities for ill fortune due wholly to his own follies? There was, for example, the fate of Ægisthus; had he not been warned of the gods, yet had gone headlong to his fate?

But Pallas Athena, goddess of wisdom, admitting all this, complained nevertheless that the deities were not always so blameless of man's

misfortune. There was, for noteworthy instance, the sorrowful fate of Ulysses, her favorite, Ulysses the prudent, the sage, the wise. When had Ulysses failed of reverence to the immortals? When had he deserved his fate? Yet did not the great chief now languish on Calypso's isle, detained there by her year after year? All this Zeus considered. It was through the instrumentality of Poseidon, god of the sea, whose favorite, Polyphemus, Ulysses had made blind, that the Greek chief was detained in the midst of the sea, far from home. Yet because of the wrath of one god should the favor of the rest be withheld from him who had always served them faithfully?

So it was agreed at last that Hermes, the messenger of the gods, be sent to Calypso to warn her that Ulysses must be released and allowed to take up once more his homeward journey. And so it was that Ulysses was allowed to depart upon his way, and again turned his face toward Ithaca.

Now in Ithaca, in the palace of Ulysses, Penelope, his wife, had, during the seventeen long years of his absence, faithfully awaited the return of her lord. Many suitors came to beg her hand in marriage, but Penelope refused them all and waited faithfully from day

to day for Ulysses; and from year to year, as he did not come, she mourned the great chief.

As time wore on and years passed and still Ulysses did not come, as other kings returned from Troy and brought no news of him, the suitors of Penelope grew first impatient, then insolent, and took up their abode at last in the very palace of Ulysses. There they feasted and drank, and urged Penelope to make her choice among them. But always, by means of one excuse or another, Penelope put them off and delayed her decision; for though she was helpless against so many, yet her heart remained true to the memory of Ulysses. With some of Ulysses' own craft, she suggested that the suitors wait until she had finished the weaving of a web or shroud on which she was then engaged. That finished she would make her choice. So the suitors agreed to wait, and waiting feasted on the beeves and drank the stored wine of the absent Ulysses. But the threads which by day Penelope had woven by night she would ravel out, so that the web was never done. When this was at last discovered by the suitors they were angry and pressed her anew for her answer. They would not wait longer. Was not Ulysses dead? Had not seven years elapsed since the

fall of Troy? Had any brought so much as faint tidings of him?

Meantime, while all this took place at the palace of Ulysses in Ithaca, the great Ulysses himself continued his journey homeward. But though Pallas Athena still befriended him, yet Poseidon, the god of the sea, was his enemy, so that after his release from Calypso's island new peril and suffering befell him. Yet with patient persistence and for three years longer he journeyed on toward Ithaca.

At the end of that time, and twenty years after his departure for Troy, his foot touched once more the shores of his own land. Pallas Athena, for her own wise ends, had changed him now in appearance to an old man, bent with years and suffering and ragged with poverty, one whom none would guess to be the great Ulysses. In this guise the goddess bade him seek not his palace, but rather the hut of Eumæus, a swineherd on his estates. At the hut of the swineherd Ulysses was received hospitably and heard there the story of all that had happened during his absence.

To this hut, too, Pallas Athena guided Telemachus, the son of Ulysses, who was but a child when his father sailed for Troy; and it was here that Ulysses made himself known to Telemachus,

and here that the father and son planned together what might be done to overthrow the suitors. It was decided that Telemachus should return to the palace and say nothing of Ulysses' return, not even to Penelope, and that the great chief should remain in the swineherd's hut that night. The next day Ulysses, still in the guise of an old man, visited the palace, where the suitors, bold and insolent and not guessing who he was, offered him jeers and taunts. Penelope, however, showed him kindness; and when the night closed and the noisy suitors were gone to rest, she had a seat brought and placed near her own at the hearth for the aged beggar; and there she questioned him, as she questioned all strangers, whether he could perchance give her tidings of Ulysses. Then the old man told her that he had, indeed, with his own eyes seen Ulysses in distant countries, and he begged her to believe that ere long Ulysses would return to his own once more.

THE CONTEST

Though Penelope longed to believe him, yet she dared not. Moved, however, by his recital, she told him something of her own woes; told him how the suitors, grown impatient, urged her once more to make her choice among them, and would not be put off. She told him, too, that

she had determined to offer them, on the morrow, a contest. In an upper chamber she had guarded all these years the bow of Ulysses, which she had always believed none but the great chief himself could bend. On the morrow, she would promise to give herself to that one of the suitors who would bend the bow and send a shaft from it through twelve rings of steel.

In this plan Ulysses saw the chance he longed for of dealing with the suitors. Still not daring to discover himself to her, lest his plan should miscarry, they parted for the night, she to her chamber to dream of Ulysses, he to sleep on the porch of his palace, dreaming of the morrow.

The following day, at a feast set for the purpose, the contest was proposed and agreed to by the suitors. One after another each tried to string the great bow of Ulysses, but not one among them all could bend it. Then Ulysses asked permission to try. The suitors protested. Should this old beggar be allowed to enter the contest with them? But the gentle Penelope urged his right to try. Then, amid the anger and jeers and taunts of the suitors, Ulysses took the great bow in his hand, tested it and tried it, turned it and felt of it; then at last, with his old-time ease, strung it, and with sure aim sent the shaft through the rings. Then, with a given

signal to Telemachus, and aided once more by Pallas Athena, Ulysses turned on the suitors and showered his shafts among them, and dealt death to them all. The disguise of age had now fallen from him. Once more he was Ulysses the strong and mighty, Ulysses returned to his own. Reunion with the patient Penelope followed, and Ulysses, united once more to his people, and beloved of his subjects, reigned long in Ithaca.

This is, of course, the mere bare outline of the tale. The story is full of stirring incidents and beautiful passages. There are stories within the story. The "Odyssey" is divided into twenty-four chapters or books. The sixth and seventh books, for instance, with their accounts of the court of Alcinous, the love of Nausicaä, comprise a beautiful story in themselves. The ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth books, giving the tale of Ulysses' adventures, are those best known and most often quoted, and are complete, almost as they stand. In these Ulysses recounts the adventures of himself and his companions in the land of the Lotos-Eaters, in the land of the Cyclops, in the land of Æolus; in these he tells of the enchantments of Circe; of his visit to the land of the Dead; the temptation of the Sirens; the escape from Scylla and Charybdis, and the

feeding on the oxen of the sun. In the other books the adventures are told of Ulysses, but these are told by him and are correspondingly strong and vivid in interest.

The nineteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-third books are especially beautiful and famous. Everywhere there is evident the touch of a master's hand. The plan and workmanship are sure and true. The structure is simple and pure in line like a Greek temple: the absence of Ulysses, the waiting of Penelope, Ulysses' return, and the recital, as he returns, of his adventures; the appearance of the hero in Ithaca, the conflict with the suitors and the triumph over them; the reunion of Ulysses and Penelope at last.

To this convincing simplicity and directness of plot are added the poet's imagination, his "invention," and his fine manner of telling the tale, what Pope calls "that unequal fire and rapture which is so forcible in Homer, that no man of a true poetical spirit is master of himself while he reads him. Everything moves, everything lives and is put in action; the reader is hurried out of himself by the force of the poet's imagination, and turns in one place to a hearer, in another to a spectator. The course of his verses resembles that of the army he describes —

'they pour along like a fire that sweeps the whole earth before it.'"

Nor are we merely hearers or spectators; we are participators, too, sympathizers, we ourselves are of the "Odyssey" as we read it. We are responsive to it, impressed by it, subtly wrought upon by it. And if, following the advice of Pater, we analyze somewhat this impression, if we "realize" it distinctly and "discriminate" it, and if we try to interpret to ourselves the unique "quality" or "virtue" which distinguishes this great book, we shall find in it some distillation of the spiritual meanings of life. The more we taste of it, the more we shall discover like a fine flavor some distinct spiritual essence pervading the entire wine.

For a truly great work of art never satisfies only a man's intellect nor squares only with his general knowledge of life; but it holds within itself, as a cup holds wine, some spiritual truth and essence to satisfy his spirit, something to explain and interpret his own spiritual longings and slake that thirst for goodness which is upon his soul.

With this in view it is interesting to note that all great books may be said to have distilled in them, as it were, not the mere general experiences of the spirit, but as their essential flavor some

one great spiritual experience, some one particular flower or fruit of the spirit gathered again and again, and pressed out over and over.

The "Odyssey," for instance, is, as is many another great book, the recital of difficulties overcome, of man's struggle with powers vaster than his own. But look carefully and you will see that in this particular book the difficulties of all kinds are overcome not by force and fierce endeavor so much as by a kind of thoughtful endurance and patience. Again and again, this endurance, this patience — for that is the better word — is insisted on; again and again this experience, this fruit of the spirit, is thrown into the winepress, as it were, and pressed out.

Study the story carefully, examine it, and you will find that patience seems to be the very center and motive of it. Homer describes Ulysses not once but again and again as a patient man. His very name, the Great Sufferer, coupled with the incident of the story, implies as much. He has many other traits besides this one of patience. He has bravery. Penelope speaks of him as the "lion-heart." He has wisdom and invention: Calypso calls him "man of many wiles." He is wise in council, traveled, strong in purpose. Yet Homer chooses oftenest to call him "the great sufferer," and in the

mouth of Menelaus puts those words in which he seems to take most care to describe him: —

> Of many valiant warriors have I known
> The counsels and the purposes, and far
> Have roamed in many lands, but never yet
> My eyes have looked on such another man
> As was Ulysses, of a heart so bold
> And such endurance.

And we find more notably still those same traits of endurance and patience shown forth in the famous cry of Ulysses to his own heart: —

> There have been times when bitter agonies
> Have tried thy patience . . .
> . . . . . .
> Endure it, heart! Thou hast borne worse than this.

Indeed, the "Odyssey" might almost be called the "Epic of Patience." Not only is the trait set out positively but negatively as well. The enduring patience of Ulysses impresses us the more strongly because it is so finely contrasted with the impatience of his companions. In one adventure after another many of them go rashly, impatiently, to their deaths, and the story knows them no more. They do not work patiently, wisely, with conditions, as does Ulysses, but brush impatiently, unwisely against them and are overcome by them.

It is not less interesting to remember that

Homer's other great character, Achilles, the hero of the "Iliad" is as notable for his rashness, his impatience, his refusal to endure, as Ulysses is famous for his long suffering. Achilles, "Ache-of-Heart," Ulysses, "Long-Suffering," are splendidly contrasted; but each touches into life the beauty of the same great spiritual quality.[1] It is only a small part of life, a small part of spiritual life, this patience, but it is this that Homer

[1] In describing Athena, Ruskin, in *Queen of the Air*, points out that the four great virtues of which she is the spirit are "Prudence (the right seeing and foreseeing of events through darkness); Justice (the righteous bestowal of favor and indignation); Fortitude (patience under trial by pain); and Temperance (patience under trial by pleasure). With respect to these four virtues, the attributes of Athena are all distinct. In her prudence, or sight in darkness, she is 'owl-eyed.' In her justice, which is the dominant virtue, she wears two robes, one of light saffron color, or color of the daybreak, falls to her feet, covering her wholly with favor and love — the calm of the sky in blessing; . . . then her robe of indignation is worn on her breast and left arm only, fringed with fatal serpents, and fastened with Gorgonian cold, turning men to stone; physically the lightning and the hail of chastisement by storm. Then in her fortitude, she bears the crested and unstooping helmet; and lastly in her temperance, she is the queen of maidenhood — stainless as the air of heaven.

"But all these virtues mass themselves in the Greek mind into the two main uses, — of Justice, or noble passion, and Fortitude, or noble patience; and of these, the chief powers of Athena, the Greeks had divinely written for them, and for all men after them, two mighty songs, — one, of the Menis, Mens, passion or zeal of Athena, breathed into a mortal whose name is 'Ache-of-Heart,' and whose short life is only the incarnate brooding burst of storm; and the other is of the foresight and fortitude of Athena, maintained by her in the heart of a mortal whose name is given him from a longer grief, Odysseus, the full of sorrow, the much enduring, the long suffering."

here, there, everywhere has selected; from the great mass of life, he has chosen this. It is not of his originating, it is old as the race. It has grown in the fields of life, as it were, in sunshine and storm, and bloomed in all seasons long before Homer himself came to wander in those fields, and wandering there chanced on it. But it is his selection, borne home to him and by him, — flower and fruit of it, and pressed out in this fine flavor that we in centuries after are privileged to taste. Here is a part of that property, that "quality," that "virtue," which distinguishes this wine, and is to be found never quite the same in any other; a part of that fine "property" and essence, that tang and bloom and "bouquet" as the French would say, to make this one of the finest wines of the world.

Or, if we dwell too long in the one simile, the truth shines as clear in another likeness. You have noted how in the most great and memorable music some one theme dominates the rest and gives especial color and meaning to the whole. If we take Wagner's operas as very notable examples, we find some one or two dominating motifs or themes occurring and recurring, such, for instance, as the "fate motif" in the "Götterdämmerung," woven in skillfully with other motifs, but more appealing, more convincing,

more memorable than the rest. It is just so that this dominating theme and motif of patience occurs and recurs in the story of the "Odyssey," first in one key, then in another; here changed a little, there broadened somewhat, but always recognizable, insisted on again and again, until consciously or unconsciously the soul has memorized it, as the ear memorizes music, and carries it away as a spiritual possession.

This motif of patience, though it occurs most often in relation to the character of Ulysses himself, recurs exquisitely, too, in the story of Penelope. Not only are Ulysses and Penelope beautifully mated as man and woman, husband and wife, but their stories are mated as well. The motif of patience which runs through the story of Ulysses is of masculine, powerful patience; in the story of Penelope, it is still patience, but feminine, exquisite, tender. For twenty long years Penelope patiently awaits her lord. Tales of his shipwreck, rumors of his death, longing and sorrow, trial and difficulty — not these, not anything can break her loving and faithful patience. She too endures, as he does, but in a different way; it is the same motif, but in a different key.

The story of Ulysses is the story of *active patience*, set out in the active events and happen-

ings which arise in his dealing with the power of men and nations and gods. The story of Penelope, woven in with the story of Ulysses, is the story of that *passive patience*, that tender and strong endurance, which is peculiarly the gift of women, and which, though biding at home, wins no less great and spiritual victories.

We have said that the greatest forms of art — and very especially this is true of great books — interpret the underlying motives and experiences of life common to all men, and appeal most of all to man's spiritual nature. It is said that "all great art calls to the spirit." The call to the spirit is here sufficiently clear. Above the great beauty of workmanship, and the truthful delineation of nature and human happening and event, rises the strong spiritual appeal. The theme of the "Odyssey," a soul patient and enduring under difficulty, calls to rich and poor, high and low, alike, and calls to them spiritually. Consciously or unconsciously we are roused by it. Something in our own experience answers to it. Have not we, too, in some voyage of the spirit, known danger and difficulty? Have not we, too, had need of such wise patience, such endurance? If we, too, might be enduring as Ulysses, and, along with him, patiently wise! Or if we, too, who have waited perhaps a lesser

time for our heart's desire, might but have such waiting faith as Penelope!

So the "Odyssey" helps us better to understand the patience and endurance of a strong soul, and calls to us to attain them, and makes us, whether we know it or not, better men and women.

To have Ulysses for friend, the faithful and patient Penelope for companion, is to add to the nobility of living. They are not people of one age or time, but types for all ages, adding to the loveliness and meaning of life, interpreting for us some of life's greatest experiences, teaching us some of its greatest truths, moulding in us unconsciously some strength and beauty not unlike their own. For more than three thousand years they and those who move through the pages of this great book have wrought upon the hearts of men, refreshed them from weariness, and invited them to nobler endeavor. Other books have lived and died, as it were, having served their brief purpose; but this one, one of the greatest books in the world, seems to have in it something undying, a touch of that immortality which characterizes all great beauty and all great art.

CHAPTER VI

THE DIVINE COMEDY

How strange the sculptures that adorn these towers!
This crowd of statues, in whose folded sleeves
Birds build their nests; while canopied with leaves
Parvis and portal bloom like trellised bowers,
And the vast minster seems a cross of flowers!
But fiends and dragons on the gargoyled eaves
Watch the dead Christ between the living thieves,
And, underneath, the traitor Judas lowers!
Ah! from what agonies of heart and brain,
What exultations trampling on despair,
What tenderness, what tears, what hate of wrong,
What passionate outcry of a soul in pain,
Uprose this poem of the earth and air,
This mediæval miracle of song!

LONGFELLOW.

And hearing also that Cicero, too, had written a book, in which, treating of friendship, he had spoken of the consolation of Lælius, that most excellent man, on the death of his friend Scipio, I set myself to read that. And although at first it was hard for me to understand the meaning of them, yet at length I succeeded so far as such knowledge of Latin as I possessed and somewhat of understanding on my part enabled me to do. And as it befalls that a man who is in search of silver sometimes, not without divine ordinance, finds gold beyond his expectations, so I, who sought for consolation, found not only healing for my grief, but instruction in the terms used by authors in science and other books.

DANTE.

IT is estimated that at least twenty-three hundred years, possibly more, lie between the writing of the "Odyssey" and the "Divine Comedy"; Homer living, it is reckoned, almost

a thousand years before the coming of Christ, Dante born twelve hundred and sixty-five years after it. How well the Italian poet knew the writings of Homer we cannot tell. It is generally supposed that, there being then no Latin translation, the older poet was inaccessible to Dante; yet in the "Inferno" Dante places Homer among other great men in Limbo where are the "blameless heathen." There he is represented as dwelling in a noble castle which is begirt with lofty walls and surrounded with meadows of fresh green. Dante's estimate of Homer is clear. The following translation is taken from William Warren Vernon's "Readings on the Inferno": "Dante sees a noble group of spirits approaching him, who, he afterward learns, are four of the greatest poets of antiquity. . . . Virgil severally names them to Dante, beginning with Homer. The good Master began to say: 'Mark him with that sword in hand, who precedes the three even as their lord. That is Homer, the sovereign poet.'"

It is further interesting to note that in the same canto Dante, with a touching commingling of pride and humility, sees himself saluted by the great poets as one of their company.

The shades of the four famous poets of antiquity ask Virgil, who is now Dante's guide, who

this may be whom he brings with him. Being told, they welcome Dante among their number. "After that they had conversed awhile together, they turned to me with sign of salutation: and my master smiled thereat. And far greater honour yet did they pay me, in that they bade me be [one] of their band."

But though the "sovereign poet" and Dante belong to one fellowship, they and their writings are as different as the two ages in which they were born. We think of the "Odyssey" as written by a man experienced, strong (it seems not unfitting that Dante should have pictured him as with a sword in his hand); a man who had known the fortunes of war, yet who was withal gentle, benign, and whose life can have retained in it, we think, no lasting bitterness. The "Divine Comedy" we know to have been written by a man exiled from all that he loved, a man who carried with him for years bitterness, a sense of wrong, and "ache of heart."

Some knowledge of Dante himself and his times and his experience is needed to throw a clear light on the purpose and design of the "Divine Comedy." He was born in Florence in 1265. The "Divine Comedy," it is believed by some, was written in the sixteen years immediately preceding his death; Boccaccio places it

somewhat earlier; some others think the greater part of it was written in the last eight years of his life.

Dante may be said to have been influenced mainly by two great experiences — his love for one woman, and his hatred of injustice.

There is neither room nor need here to enter into the history of Florence of Dante's day. It will be sufficient, perhaps, to recall that Florence was at that time a city torn by political strife, and that Dante took important part in the long-continued contest between the Guelphs and Ghibellines — her two warring factions. His name was early associated with the fortunes of Florence. First as soldier, later as magistrate, he served her; and her interests were forever dear to him. While the city of his birth was sold or betrayed to her enemies for lust of power or gold, we find him maintaining toward her a high ideal of personal service. When there was needed an envoy to Rome in behalf of his city, we find him bewailing that none but himself was fit to go, and none but himself fit to stay to defend her. By this time he had become prominently associated with that party known as the Bianchi, which was opposed by the Neri. It was, indeed, while he was absent in Rome that the Neri gained control of Florence, pillaged the

house of Dante, established a government of their own, and passed sentence of banishment upon him. We are told they even went so far as to condemn him to be burnt alive — if he were ever found in his forbidden home city.

So Dante's long exile was begun. Somewhat later, in about 1303, the Bianchi made an attempt to wrest Florence from the Neri, but were unsuccessful. In this failure Dante saw his cherished dream of a return to Florence definitely defeated. With less hope now, he wandered from place to place, exiled from all that was dear to him, longing always for the city of his birth with a longing born of his lasting and tender love for her, yet bearing about with him, too, a bitter sense of the wrongs he had suffered, and a hatred of her injustice.

Once, it is true, the magistrates of Florence proposed that he return, but named as their condition that he make public apology to the reigning power, and pay a fine. Great as was his longing to return, his keen sense of justice forbade him to accept such terms. He rejected them, and thus, passing new sentence of exile on himself, replied: "If I cannot return without calling myself guilty, I will never return."

His life from now on remained to the end one of wandering and disappointment. But though

the success of that project nearest to his heart, his return to Florence, was persistently denied him, yet another purpose was fulfilling itself during the remaining years of his life and his exile. The great poem he had planned long before was taking definite form.

Before studying the later work of Dante, it is well to turn to the "Vita Nuova," written when he was twenty-seven, in which he celebrates his love for Beatrice. Here we find not a common love story; it is rather the account of a great spiritual passion. In it he tells of his meeting with a being who from thenceforth exerted the strongest possible influence on his life and character.

In his ninth year, it appears, Dante saw for the first time a child one year his junior whom he calls Beatrice. From then until he was eighteen he never even so much as spoke with her, but kept her in his heart a cherished ideal. His recorded interviews with her are infrequent and fragmentary; yet her beauty and her spiritual qualities gained such sway over him that she became the very lady of his soul. From the moment he saw her there began for him that new life which he has recorded in the great love autobiography which he called by that name. Though the "Vita Nuova" is written in a manner so

foreign to our own ideas of a confession of love, though its meanings are often hidden, and its symbols often mystical, yet it is exquisite with rich homage and replete with spiritual meanings.

Beatrice died when Dante was twenty-five, yet all through the remaining thirty-one years of his life the memory of her led and swayed him. Two years after her death he plans to write a larger work than the "Vita Nuova" in her honor.

The "Vita Nuova" ends with these words:—

> A wonderful vision appeared to me, in which I saw things which made me resolve to speak no more of this blessed one [Beatrice] until I could more worthily treat of her. And to attain to this, I study to the utmost of my power, as she truly knows. So that, if it shall please Him through whom all things live, that my life be prolonged for some years, I hope to say of her what was never said of any woman.

Boccaccio in his life of Dante tells us that the "Divine Comedy" was begun in Dante's thirty-fifth year, that it was then interrupted by his exile, and was resumed later.

He "in his thirty-fifth year," he says, "began to devote himself to carrying into effect that upon which he had been meditating, namely, to rebuke and glorify the lives of men, according to their different deserts."

But though it is evident from his own and Boccaccio's testimony that the "Divine Com-

edy" was planned early in Dante's life, it is evident, too, that the "Divine Comedy" as we know it could not have been written by the young Dante; could only have been written, indeed, out of those later "agonies of heart and brain" — out of the suffering and "hate of wrong" which came to him during the years of his exile.

We have spoken of the two great forces, the love and hate which notably moulded the character of Dante, his love of Beatrice and his hatred of the injustice of men. At first we note these two are held separate in his life, as they are kept distinct in his writings. The young Dante is supremely the lover of Beatrice. Dante of somewhat later years is supremely the hater of injustice — such injustice as he saw in the tyrannies and unequal governments of his own day. But as years rolled by, his love and his hate took on a certain relation to each other. His keen and bitter judgments of men were illumined more and more by that spiritual insight with which love had endowed him.

So the two main experiences of his life, which might be summed up as his love of beauty and goodness and his hatred of injustice and sin, flow into one channel, and mingle in the "Divine Comedy." In it we find the uncompromising

sternness of the Dante of later years, commingled with all the pity and tenderness of Dante, the lover of Beatrice. Carlyle, writing of him, says: "I know not in the world an affection equal to that of Dante. It is a tenderness, a trembling, longing, pitying love, like the wail of Æolian harps, soft, soft like a child's young heart."

This Dante, who has known such storm and stress, who has fought for justice so bitterly, so sternly, yet often in his journey through the inferno swoons for very pity of the just punishments he there witnesses. At sight of Paolo and Francesca de Rimini's sorrowful love and their pitiful doom he bows down his face, we are told.

> And so long did I hold it down that at last the Poet [Virgil who was his guide] said to me: "Of what art thou thinking?" When I answered, I began: "Ah me! How many tender thoughts, how much fond desire, led them to this woeful pass!" . . . Then I turned again to them, and I spake and began: "Francesca, thy sufferings make me sad, and full of pity, even to tears."

He then asks Francesca further concerning her love. As she finishes telling him the touching story, the effect of the recital on Dante is such, he tells us, that —

> . . . for pity,
> I swooned away as if I had been dying,
> And fell, even as a dead body falls.

Indeed, everywhere throughout the poem are evidences of Dante's gentleness and his pity. Yet not less notable are those fearful evidences of his stern sense of justice. Stern and sweet; never perhaps in one man, certainly never in one book, are such sternness and such sweetness to be found. "Infinite pity, yet also infinite rigour of law; it is so Nature is made; it is so Dante discerned that she was made," says Carlyle, and it might be added that out of such discernment was Dante's own nature fashioned.

THE TITLE OF THE BOOK

It may seem to some strange that a book dealing seriously with the most serious questions of life should be called a "comedy." In a letter attributed to Dante he sets out the meaning of the word as it was accepted in his own times: —

> Comedy . . . differs from tragedy in its matter, in this way, — that tragedy in its beginning is admirable and quiet, in its ending or catastrophe foul and horrible. . . . Comedy, on the other hand, begins with adverse circumstances, but its theme has a happy termination.

The "Divine Comedy" begins with adverse circumstances, but its theme has a happy termination. This in its simplest form is the plan of it: it is the story of a journey which Dante and his friend and teacher, Virgil, at the heavenly

bidding of Beatrice, make through those three worlds which Dante believed awaited the soul at death.

Scartazzini, one of the ablest of Dante commentators, remarking on the form adopted by Dante, says: "The form of a journey through the realms of the next world was suggested to him by the age in which he lived; the literature of that age is so full of visions of the future state, of descriptions in prose and poetry of the torments and the bliss of eternity, that it were childish to ask which of these visions and legends Dante may have known and used. No doubt he knew many of them."

Yet, if we would understand even the form of the "Divine Comedy," it were well to study a little these "visions and legends" which were so common in his day. To do this we shall need to leave many of our modern ideas and beliefs and prejudices behind us, and travel back in thought to those times and beliefs in the midst of which Dante wrote. It is difficult, a real task of the intellect, for the modern mind to conceive or realize men's beliefs exactly as they existed in that day. Indeed, it is perhaps not possible for us to realize them fully; for the intervening centuries have wrought upon us, and the experience and thought of many generations have obliter-

ated or softened some of the most pronounced and strongly colored of the old beliefs. The modern mind, however much it may cherish superstitions of its own, is freed so largely from those particular superstitions and conditions in the midst of which Dante lived that it can hardly realize the willingness and simplicity with which the great mass of the people, as well as many of the more learned, accepted the mediæval entirely materialistic conception of hell, purgatory, and heaven.

While Dante summed up and as it were coördinated the popular beliefs of his day, yet before he wrote there had not lacked other writers who had taken pains to give not a symbolic or poetical description, but rather what were claimed by many to be literal and authentic accounts of hell, purgatory, and heaven. As the heaven described by these writers was one to satisfy the senses — containing trees which bore twelve kinds of fruits; odors so sweet that the senses swooned with pleasure, etc., so there did not lack writers who allied fanaticism and ingenuity to describe a place of terrible torture, where, however inconsistently, "immaterial spirits suffered bodily and material torments. . . . Of that which hell, purgatory, heaven were in popular opinion during the Middle Ages, Dante was but

the full, deep, concentrated expression; what he embodied in verse, all men believed, feared, hoped."[1]

The purgatory of St. Patrick, the vision of the priest Wakelin, recounted as authentic in ecclesiastical history, the hell of St. Brandon are all well known. Some accept, too, as sincere the account of one Alberic, a monk of Monte Cassino. The hell he describes is drawn with great detail, and, because of his profession, with a greater presumption of authority, doubtless, than can be said to belong to that of Dante.

The hell of the monk Alberic was shown to him, it is told, by St. Peter and two angels. St. Peter tells him that he shall see the least torments first, and "afterward successively the more terrible punishments of the other world." He comes then to the "least" of the torments, which is that of infants and little children who are purged "in red-hot burning cinders and boiling vapour; those of one year old being subjected to this torment during seven days; those of two years, fourteen days; and so on, in proportion to their age." Other torments increasing in horror are then carefully described. Further along, the monk is shown the "torment of the ladders," red-hot ladders on which sinners

[1] Milman's *History of Latin Christianity.*

were doomed to climb, with the alternative of clinging to the red-hot bars, or falling into great boilers of melted oil, pitch, or resin. This account might be extended indefinitely from a great mass and assortment of skillfully devised tortures. The existence of such tortures was, we are told, taught not only by many a devout priest of the mediæval Church, but was accepted generally without revulsion by laymen of all classes. The contrast with our own less literal times is obvious enough.

It may be objected by some that Dante was not entirely in line with the Church of his day. It is not to be forgotten that in 1329 (but a few years after the poet's death) Cardinal Poggetto caused some of Dante's works to be publicly burned, and proposed to dig up and burn the bones of the famous man on the ground that Dante was a heretic. But it was not to Dante's descriptions of hell, we know, that the cardinal objected. It was rather that Dante held, it was thought, dangerous ideals of government; and would have presumed to tell popes how to conduct their state.

So, while he was hated or condemned for this, and for his bold condemnation of those who, whether in humble or high places, failed of their sacred trust, not one voice that we know of

was raised in protest that his descriptions of the torments of hell were either unlikely or out of line with the teachings of the Church. Some of the simpler-minded of his times believed he had actually been in hell. They used to point to him in the streets; and the mothers would show him to their children: "See how his skin is dark and his hair crisped; that is with the fires of hell which he has visited." Carlyle, in speaking of the mediæval and material hell as believed in by Dante and his contemporaries, says: "He no more doubted of it, and that he himself would see it, than we doubt that we would see Constantinople if we went thither."

Though we may disagree with this and may choose to believe that Dante wrote poetically and not literally of his own beliefs, the beliefs of the masses of the people of that day cannot fairly be so softened. Given the painstaking descriptions written down by good men of the Church, reading the accounts given by sincere priests and monks, the entire literalness of the mediæval conception of hell cannot be fairly denied. In fairness, however, it should not be looked on as a thing apart, but rather as a consistent part of those ages, if terrible, yet magnificent as well, to which we give the generalizing title "mediæval." These are the "fiends and dragons on the

gargoyled eaves" of a structure which rises nevertheless in grandeur and dignity.

Dante writes, then, of paradise, purgatory, hell in no indefinite way, but clearly, giving details, startling enough to us, but by no means unfamiliar to men and women of his own times. It is these men and women and these times that we must keep in mind in studying the story.

THE STORY OF THE DIVINE COMEDY

The story, briefly, of the "Divine Comedy" is as follows: —

At nightfall of Good Friday in the year 1300 Dante finds himself in a dark wood (said to symbolize the wood of sin), threatened by wild beasts (these beasts the commentators tell us symbolize Pride, Avarice, and Sensual Pleasure); Dante knows neither where to turn nor what to do to save himself from them. At this point, there appears to him the pagan poet Virgil (here generally supposed to symbolize Intellect or Reason), who offers to direct his steps, and to guide him through the world of departed spirits. Dante, even while accepting the offer, fears to go on so dread a journey. Virgil then tells him that he has come to Dante at the instigation of Beatrice, one of the blessed in heaven, who has sent him.

Reassured at this word from his dead lady, Dante accepts the offer of Virgil's guidance, and they enter the inferno.

Over the gates of this dread place stands this inscription (I ask you to note it very especially, as it will help us later to determine the great underlying meaning of the poem, and the poet's message): —

> Justice moved my Great Maker to build me. The Divine Omnipotence, the Highest Wisdom, and the Primal Love made me. . . . Abandon all hope ye who enter in.

The two poets, Virgil and Dante, now descend into a great region shaped like a vast inverted truncated cone. It consists of nine concentric circles which diminish successively in circumference. Each of the nine circles is presided over by particular demons and in each one distinct classes of human beings, countless in number, who have sinned in the flesh, are variously punished.

In the larger and upper circles the punishments are lighter and less dire (we are reminded here of the monk Alberic), being for those who have sinned not through selfishness but rather through negligence or love. In the lower and narrower circles are punished more heavily the heavier sins of selfishness, such as gluttony, avarice, prodigality, wrath, etc. Deeper still are punished sins of violence, such as murder, sui-

cide, etc., and, deeper yet, sins of malice; here are the hypocrites of all classes, falsifiers, false witnesses, and traitors. At the very bottom of the inferno, frozen in a lake of ice, is Lucifer the arch-traitor, the angel who in old legend turned traitor to God, and led a rebel host against the Almighty.

Having passed through all the circles of the inferno, and having witnessed there with pity and horror the punishment of countless souls, many of whom Dante knows and speaks with, the two poets make their way through a long subterranean passage, once more to the light of the stars. This is at daybreak of Easter morning.

They find themselves on the seashore at the foot of a vast mountain, the Mountain of Purgatory. The scene is beautiful and peaceful, and Venus, the star of love, shines in the dawn.

They beg of the guardian of purgatory permission to enter on the ascent of the mountain, and their request is granted. With the dew of the morning Virgil washes away the stain of tears and the smoke of the inferno from the face of Dante and they begin the ascent.

The purgatory is an island mountain, a place, as the name indicates, of purgation, a place in which by being purged of sin one is prepared for eternal blessedness.

As the inferno was built in descending circles, the purgatory is formed of terraces which ascend. At the approach to each of these terraces an angel is stationed, who, to comfort the penitents, chants appropriately one of the Beatitudes. The Angel of Humility, for instance, stands at the entrance to that terrace where pride is purged and sings, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." At the entrance to the terrace where the sin of wrath is purged stands the Angel of Peace, singing, "Blessed are the peacemakers," etc., etc.

Following much the same plan observed in the inferno, on the broader and lower terraces of the mount of purgatory are those souls which are to be purged of the sins of negligence, of pride, of envy, and anger; on the higher and steeper terraces are those who do penance for the sins of avarice and prodigality, of sloth, of gluttony, of sensuality, etc., etc.

On each of the terraces the poets pause to witness the penance of the sinful but repentant souls, who speak with them and question them. At last they come to the summit of the mountain. Here Virgil leaves Dante. Dante is told that from henceforth it is not Virgil, but Beatrice who shall guide him.

In the journey through paradise, Beatrice

leads Dante from sphere to sphere, through the nine heavens of the blessed. Here he sees the souls of those who have sought honor and the esteem of their fellowmen. These press around Dante, longing to be of service to him and to impart to him some of their light. Farther on, in the third heaven, he sees those blessed souls who have given themselves to love; next, he sees those who have turned other souls to righteousness; those who have fought for Christ; next, those souls of the upright, kings and rulers who have given themselves to justice; still farther on, the seventh heaven, of contemplation; and beyond this, the heaven of Christ and his apostles; — and still beyond this, Dante is finally shown that crystalline heaven where God Himself dwells with the angelic host.

The long journey over, Dante now obtains permission to remain in the contemplation of God. Having reached this, which he believes to be the highest aim of man, the story of the journey closes and the poem ends.

WHY IS THE "DIVINE COMEDY" SO GREAT?

There are to-day more students of Dante than ever before; the fame of this work grows rather than lessens with the passing centuries. This poem, which seems in one light so strangely,

fearfully materialistic, sways men and satisfies their souls as no mere material thing could ever do. When we study it carefully the reason is plain. This "Divine Comedy," for all its strange and quaint devices, belonging to an age so different from our own, is not only a thing of intensely human interest, but, despite all the apparent materialism of its detail, is intensely spiritual at the core. Dante saw clearly, more clearly, perhaps, than any one else has ever seen them, the material and spiritual consequences of sin. He saw the great natural laws of cause and effect, reward and punishment, working through men's vices and virtues. And just here we come close to the great understructure of the whole vast poem. This Dante, who dwelt at such length on the details of punishment and reward, had, you remember, a very passion for justice. He had suffered injustice himself at the hands of his fellowmen. In the world about him he saw injustice triumph. He had known the lawlessness and prejudice and disorder of petty and warring factions. He had seen unfair sentence meted out by powerful and unjust hands; he himself had been robbed and despised, and that by the very city he had cherished. But like all truly great men he could see beyond the personal experience and grasp

the universal truth; he could see beyond the result of men's sins as they affected his own life, and could see the larger effect of sin, and could set himself to find its larger remedy. Despite his own experience of injustice, he knew that God's laws stood sure, let the world disregard them as it chose. God was not mocked, not even by all the follies and mockeries of life. Under the tumult of men's sins and failings lay the eternal order. In the unseen worlds, in the worlds of the spirit, there God's justice must, he knew, prevail.

Reason and Love (you remember, Reason is symbolized by his beloved poet Virgil, and Love by Beatrice) had guided his spirit and had shown him the workings of this great divine justice. In honor of his lady and for the good of men's souls, he would write of this justice for all men to read. This was the truth he knew and knew best. It was this truth he would set himself to reveal, to interpret to others.

DANTE'S OWN EXPLANATION

You will note that the poem was cast in a form which all could understand. Dante wrote it not in Latin for scholars. He wrote it in Italian, the popular, the "vulgar" tongue, that all men might read it. And by using the form of those

three spiritual worlds believed in so firmly and literally by the people of his age, he would the more surely be able to make known to many that which Reason, in the form of Virgil (or interpret it more broadly and you have not Virgil, but all that reason stands for, books or reading or experience or reasoning of the intellect), and Love, in the form of Beatrice (and interpret this broadly and you have sympathy, pity, understanding, yearning), had revealed to him concerning justice; not justice as administered faultily by man, but justice as established by God. It is plainly justice which he himself names as the whole underlying idea and *motif* of the poem — reward and punishment *justly* administered.

To his friend Can Grande, to whom Dante dictates the "Paradiso," he writes this clear statement: —

> The subject of this work must be understood as taken literally [to the letter] and then as interpreted symbolically [according to the allegorical meaning]. The subject, then, of the whole work, taken literally, is simply a consideration of the state of souls after death. . . . But if the work is considered symbolically [according to its allegorical meaning], the subject is man, *liable to the reward or punishment of justice.*

It was written, moreover, with the highest possible purpose, the highest purpose that any

author can have. In the same letter, the one already quoted, Dante says: —

> The aim of the work is to remove those living in this life from a state of misery, and to guide them to a state of happiness.

Here, then, and set out in his own words, are the plan and purpose of the "Divine Comedy." All this helps immensely to an understanding of the book.

However literally many of the people of Dante's day may have taken the poem, we of a later day inevitably lay greatest stress on its symbolism and spiritual meanings. It revolts us somewhat, perhaps, as it very probably did not the people of that age, to read of the envious, for instance, — those who do penance for envy, — as seated like blind men against a cliff in purgatory, with their eyes sewed up with wire. But if we look at this as a mere figure, as something in whose actuality we in no way believe, we come even all the more surely to its inner meaning, and find it to be a symbol of deep truth. Envy is that sin in us which allows us to look with greed on the blessings of others. Dante knows that the soul in whom the sin of envy is to be corrected must give up such envious sight. So in the "Purgatorio" the envious sit with their eyes closed; it is their penance. In their ears ring the

warning voices of those who have sinned greatly in envy. It is these warning sinners, together with the gentle Angel of Brotherly Love, who help to teach them, in time, to renounce envy. You see how complete and well planned the thing is. Not only as penance, but as cure for the sin of envy, what better could we have? — and note, too, the exact justice of it.

This is only one instance. Everywhere throughout this great and carefully conceived book, we find similar spiritual truths, clothed in a like careful symbolism, and God's great spiritual laws as truthfully interpreted. However given to pity for those who suffer the consequences of sin Dante himself may be, — and again and again his pity overcomes him, — yet his pity never clouds his clear vision of that higher justice which throughout these three worlds of his writing he sees operate unfailingly.

He is no sentimentalist, this Dante. He is determined to tell the truth as it has been revealed to him, be that truth pleasing or awful. He will gloze over nothing. Those for whom he writes this "Divine Comedy" are to be "guided from misery to happiness," never by avoiding but always by fulfilling God's law. We are to receive the full wages of sin and nothing less. Forgiveness of sin (he has no such gentle inter-

pretation of forgiveness as is common to many of us), forgiveness of sin, in his stern vision, is not to be given by man or friend or priest, or even by God. Sin is to be purged and done away with only by the personal, painful, and resolute acquirement and practice of virtue. In the same manner, Dante would have men see the consistent, lawful, just rewards of blessedness, given in just degree only to those who by their virtue have earned them.

If we turn back now to the inscription over the entrance to the inferno, its deeper meaning is clear: "Justice moved my Great Maker to build me. The Divine Omnipotence, the Highest Wisdom and the Primal Love made me. . . . Abandon all hope ye who enter in."

In the world in which Dante lived there were those who escaped the punishment of sin, but in God's more spiritual worlds Dante believed this was not so. There the consequences of sin were sure, and were ordered in the beginning by Divine Omnipotence, the Highest Wisdom, and Primal Love. Such consequences, he conceived, are a part of the consistent law of God, and the law of God is eternal and unchanging. Abandon all hope. You shall in no wise change, nor alter, nor escape the results of sin.

This stern, clear vision of the working of

God's eternal laws is the more remarkable when we remember that it was attained in a corrupt age, when the very Church itself, the generally admitted spiritual force of the day, was not without its grave faults. It was not a very great while before that the divine command had come to the saintly Francis of Assisi: "Rebuild my Church." If it was in a less saintly spirit, it was not in a less earnest one that Dante lent his own hand to the matter.

The "Divine Comedy" was written in part during the "pontificate of the Frenchman John XXII, the reproof of whose simony Dante puts into the mouth of St. Peter, who declares his seat vacant ["Paradiso," XXVII], whose damnation the poet himself seems to prophesy ["Inferno," XI], and against whose election he had endeavored to persuade the cardinals in a vehement letter."

In describing the Church as it was at the beginning of the thirteenth century a Catholic writer tells us, in speaking of the rich gifts given by powerful princes to win the favor of ecclesiastics, "Thus it was not through faith entirely that the Church became rich and temporally powerful."

Dante must have found himself oppressed in spirit, and to quote further the same author, "as

all good men were, in a world where simony was almost the rule, and high and feudal lords and barons, ecclesiastical and secular, were playing the part of Judas for power and riches."

In the nineteenth canto of the "Inferno," Dante gives himself over boldly to the condemnation of the vice of simony — the selling of spiritual gifts for worldly consideration. He shows the simoniac popes and priests as receiving the full penalty of their sins, even like the rest of mankind, and reproaches them bitterly. Here in the "Divine Comedy," in his fierce vision and conception of justice, is no exemption from the workings of God's justice; no, not though the sinners be the earthly representatives and ministers of God. Here are God's great and just and, therefore, loving laws, working as they have always worked, unchanging, Dante conceives them, as God Himself is unchanging; and like God "without shadow of turning," dependable, inevitable, merciful in their very exactness. Throughout the entire poem with its record of unnumbered souls, not one soul, either for the consideration of power or prestige or wealth or holy office, escapes what Dante conceives to be its ordered and lawful and just doom.

Yet in dwelling on Dante's stern sense of justice, it must not be forgotten that Dante con-

ceived of justice and love working together, in God's laws. Not alone Justice, but Highest Wisdom and Love, he tells us, established the order of God's law, whereby it is given man, as it is given no other creature, to choose between good and evil, reaping the consequences of each.

THE MOST REMARKABLE FEATURE OF THE "DIVINE COMEDY"

Each great book contains something distinctive, some "fine flavor," some new or different or striking interpretation of life; it has some *essential* feature which distinguishes it from all other books.

The most remarkable feature of the "Divine Comedy" is Dante's clear vision of the identity of the sin with its punishment. He carefully identifies each sin with its peculiar, and what may be said to be its *natural*, punishment or result. The spirits in the first circle of the inferno, for instance, whose sin is that of indecision, are blown as are sands of the desert, — hither, thither, — and are condemned forever to follow an inconstant fluctuating banner which floats before them, now here, now there. It reminds us of the old Jewish decree: "Wherewithal a man sinneth, by the same also shall he be punished."

Those who have allowed themselves to be car-

ried away by sensuality are blown in a whirling storm, like the storm of passion itself. Those who have taken their own lives, who have willfully renounced life and motion, and the freedom to come and go in God's sunlit world, are, in the poet's vision, condemned to stand rooted to one place as trees in the dim and awful wood of the suicides.

"Punishments," says Scartazzini, referring to the consistency of them in the "Divine Comedy," "are developed into logical consistency from the sin itself. . . . No single punishment has been described by Dante solely in order to stimulate the fancy and inspire terror, but only such as result, with the necessity of natural laws, from the nature of the sins. That he, a child of the Middle Age, should have risen to a conception which even at the present day is philosophically incontestable, shows his true greatness and makes him stand alone in his own time, which, indeed, could not understand him. . . . Thus Dante's 'Hell' proposes to answer the question, what sin is in its essence, and what fruit it bears in time and eternity. If a man has once recognized that sin is a hateful thing which deforms body and soul, and at the same time a horribly cruel tormentor which tortures the sinner without remission in time and eternity,

the yearning after redemption must awaken in him, so that in anxiety for his own salvation he asks, 'What must I do to become free from sin?' To answer this question is the aim of the 'Purgatory.'"

When we pass on to the "Purgatorio," we find a not less clear sense of justice. Here, in describing the soul's effective penitence, we find Dante equally just. Here the proud who are striving to purge away the sins of pride (those who on earth held their heads so high) are bent under burdens that force their proud heads to bow, and so teach them humility. On the very paths they tread are pictured, in marble, types of proud men and women, on which they must tread, even as they must tread on their own arrogance before they can become purged of the sins of pride. The angry whose anger has blinded them are (as a consequence and penance of their sin) wrapped in a dense smoke and must, ere they can be rid of their sin, exercise themselves in gentleness and kindness. The lazy must be busily active; the gluttons must practice abstinence. In each case these sinners must regard and study other examples of their own vice; they are thus forced to use their reason. They must watch the same vice operative in other lives; they must contemplate, too, examples of

the corrective virtue they are striving to attain. You see the consistency and the unfailing justice of it all.

Instance after instance might be given further, but enough has been quoted to point out somewhat the clear, just vision that Dante had of sin and virtue and their consequences. He tells us of each as a thing governed, as all other things are governed finally, by God's order and justice. He shows us sin rationalized, as it were, punished by its consistent unavoidable consequence and result. Here is not found mentioned pardon in the ordinary sense; neither indulgence nor any canceling whatsoever of the just and awful consequences of sin; to the punishments or rewards herein shown there is lent no deterring hand. Here in Dante's vision is found, rather, the soul itself tasting for itself pure justice, excused from nothing, mounting the difficult way, enduring the just punishments, performing the required and long and painful tasks. There has not been before, it is unlikely there will ever be again, so wonderful a conception of justice and of man's human relation to a just God. And Dante somehow conveys to us that this God of whom he writes is, not despite his justice, but exactly because of it, a loving God. It is this justice, this fair dealing between God and man, that gives to

man in Dante's eyes his human dignity, and gives him, almost, a kind of touching equality with God.

THE UNDERLYING MEANING OF THE POEM

By Dante's own assertion the chief thought underlying the entire "Divine Comedy" is Justice. This may be said to be the Epic of Justice. Dante strives himself to be a just man. He contemplates and expounds justice. He insists on it; he shows it to us, now in this light, now in another. This is life as he has seen it; this is that part of life which has most impressed him, and which he chooses to reveal to us.

The "Divine Comedy" is human in many ways — and strongly human in its appeal. It is human with tenderness, with pity, human in its vast understanding of human sin and virtue; but it is human most of all in this — in its call to the spirit for a love and understanding and practice of justice. This love of justice and order and fairness, this innate longing toward reason — for reason is only a higher kind of justice — is something common to us all. It is among the high ideals of human life.

The world's great books are neither mere forms and fashions of imagination nor are they built on men's imaginings and speculations, —

they are a very piece of life itself. They explain life and interpret it in such a way that all men may understand. Justice, as Dante interprets it, is God's law, nature's law, and inwoven with the daily happenings of daily life. We see the working of it in all about us, in our friends, our companions, ourselves. The glutton, the sensualist, the usurer, whether these be ourselves or others, are possessed of more than their sins, they are possessed of those sins' inevitable consequences and cannot escape them; the unselfish, the humble, the pure in heart are possessed of more than their virtues and carry with them and cannot escape some of those just and consistent rewards which Dante pictured so vividly and symbolically in the "Divine Comedy."

And as this justice of which Dante writes is neither pitiless nor merciless, but, as we understand it better, is revealed as something loving and wise, so Dante himself is to all those who come to know him well, not stern and harsh as he at first appears. He is, rather, one of those great souls who carry in their hearts a yearning love of their fellowmen; he would if he could lead them "from a state of misery and guide them to a state of happiness."

It is Ruskin, a careful student of Dante, who declares that it is only shallow people who think

Dante stern. And it might be added that it is only the shallow who would seem to find in the "Divine Comedy" a merely merciless justice. Those who study the poem and grasp its larger meaning will remember that this justice of which Dante writes so unflinchingly is not a fine figment of his imagination, but is rather that which by divine establishment underlies the law and order of the world, and is the basis for all the onward progress of the spirit. They will recall that on it mainly is built the dignity of our human destiny and our human hopes. Turning once more to the inscription we noted at first, which Dante saw over the dread place of justice, they will read it with clearer insight and better understanding: "Justice moved my Great Maker to build me; the Divine Omnipotence, the Highest Wisdom, and the Primal Love, made me."

CHAPTER VII

GOETHE'S FAUST

And when the storm in forests roars and grinds,
The giant firs, in falling, neighbor boughs
And neighbor trunks with crushing weight bear down,
And falling, fill the hills with hollow thunders, —
Then to the cave secure thou leadest me,
Then show 'st me mine own self, and in my breast
The deep, mysterious miracles unfold.
And when the perfect moon before my gaze
Comes up with soothing light, around me float
From every precipice and thicket damp
The silvery phantoms of the ages past
And temper the austere delight of thought.

GOETHE'S *Faust*,
Translated by BAYARD TAYLOR.

Here are the poets in their singing robes and here stand we, a very miscellaneous and dusty company by comparison. But through some heavenly hospitality we get presented to them. . . . And, marvellously enough! we discover that the poets and ourselves are friends already: that we have always cared for the same things, kept the same ideals, loved beauty, and like poor Malvolio in the play thought "very nobly of the soul." All the past, as we listen, becomes a part of the moment's joy, and the long, long future beckons. We perceive that the longer we listen the deeper will be the charm, that the ear grows finer by hearing and the voices even more alluring and more wise; for these are spiritual utterances, and are spiritually discerned.

BLISS PERRY.

"FAUST" is sometimes called the German "Divine Comedy." Yet it differs greatly from that work both in theme and form. Dante, living in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, wrote the "Divine Comedy" and, using the mediæval

symbols of his day, wrote of a soul's experience in its journey through hell, purgatory, and heaven. Goethe, living in the less mystical eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, wrote of a soul's experience on its journey through earthly life.

Goethe was born in 1749 and died in 1832, and into his eighty-three years were crowded rich and exceptional experiences of love, art, science, political and social power. To describe the experiences of his hero, Faust, Goethe might look into his own life and write. He was, it is said, a man well-nigh perfect physically and mentally, and added to this he possessed every advantage of social position, which gave him wide opportunity to use his natural gifts.

To understand a great book we must understand something of the times in which it was written. The "Odyssey" reflects much of the serenity and beauty and beliefs of the early Greek ages; the "Divine Comedy" is colored with the gloom and creeds and superstitions of the Middle Ages; "Faust," written in a more modern, restless age, an age of intellectual aspirations, scientific investigations, and religious questioning, is a very piece of that age, and richly colored by it. The drama of "Faust" is itself a kind of turbulent thing, broken into uneven scenes often difficult to understand, and

sometimes one loses in its speculation and imagery the thread and theme of the story; so that unless one knows beforehand what to expect one is bewildered by its almost too great variety, which is so largely a result of the very restlessness and questioning of that modern age in which Goethe lived.

THE GREAT ART PERIODS

In a study of literature, or of any of the fine arts, we must admit three great periods: first, the classic, under which general term we include those ideals of art which found their greatest perfection in the great age of Greece, an age the chief flower of which was a kind of bodily perfection, a delight in a kind of strong and quiet and serene beauty. To this period belong, for instance, the "Odyssey," as literature; the Parthenon as architecture. Second: the mediæval (literally the middle age) with its superstitions, its grotesque imagery, its despising of the body, its almost fanatical exaltation of the soul, its insistence on the imperfection of man, its passionate desire for spiritual development and reward, its fantastic belief in demons, evil spirits, magic, enchantments, and the like. To this period belong the "Divine Comedy," some of the great mediæval cathedrals with their niched

saints and gargoyle demons; and to this belong some of those fantastic detailed descriptions of hell and purgatory such as are found in the account given by the monk Alberic of Monte Cassino. And, third: the period of the Renaissance, or Rebirth. To this belongs the rebirth of the old classic ideals which had long been superseded by the mediæval.

Pater speaks of the Renaissance as: "A many-sided but yet united movement, in which the love of the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake, the desire for a more liberal and comely way of conceiving life, make themselves felt, urging those who experience this desire to search out first one and then another means of intellectual or imaginative enjoyment, and directing them not merely to the discovery of old and forgotten sources of this enjoyment, but to the divination of fresh sources thereof — new experiences, new subjects of poetry, new forms of art. . . . Here and there, under rare and happy conditions, in pointed architecture, in the doctrines of romantic love, in the poetry of Provence, the rude strength of the Middle Age turns to sweetness; and the taste for sweetness generated there becomes the seed of the classical revival in it, prompting it constantly to seek after the springs of perfect sweetness in the

Hellenic world. And coming after a long period in which this instinct had been crushed, that true 'dark age,' in which so many sources of intellectual and imaginative enjoyment had actually disappeared, this outbreak is rightly called a Renaissance, a revival."

"Faust" is an almost perfect type of this new era as it existed, not in the beginning — namely at the end of the twelfth century — but as it was affected in its later days by the modern thought of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In "Faust" we find classic and mediæval interwoven, while running through the fabric are threads of the new scientific and religious influences. When "Faust" was written, the modern age of bold questioning and research was well begun.

If we keep all this in mind when we read "Faust," the great variety of it and the mixture of classic and mediæval and modern forms will interest rather than bewilder us.

THE STORY OF FAUST

Goethe from early youth knew the old mediæval Faust legend, and when a boy not infrequently saw it acted as a puppet play. The story, briefly, is that of a man — one Doctor Faustus gifted with powers of magic — who for

certain values received, certain worldly pleasures, etc., sold his soul to the Devil. Goethe's "Faust" is based on the old legend, but in detail and general handling differs widely from it.

The play begins with a prologue in heaven in which Mephistopheles, the Spirit of Denial, is found sneering at the world as God has made it. He finds man a discontented and wretched enough creature. When God mentions Faust as a possible exception, and sees in Faust's "confused service" a promise of goodness, Mephistopheles offers to wager that if he had permission to try his powers with Faust he could prove God wrong.

Thereupon God gives Mephistopheles leave to deal with Faust. God does not say that Faust cannot be tempted to sin, but only that no material pleasure which Mephistopheles can offer will quench in Faust the instinctive spiritual aspiration toward good. If Mephistopheles does succeed in satisfying Faust with such worldly pleasures and powers as he is able to give him, the soul of Faust shall be his.

The prologue ended, the drama itself begins.

It is midnight of Easter eve. Faust, an old man, a doctor of science and philosophy and gifted with powers of magic, is in his study. The room is filled with books, objects of art, appara-

tus for scientific investigation. It is a beautiful Gothic chamber, yet to Faust it is little better than a dungeon. He is bitterly dicontented with all his knowledge, nothing satisfies him, and his own life, despite its rich endowments, seems to him a wretched and worthless thing.

To satisfy his longing he summons at last, by means of magic, the Earth Spirit, hoping to find through it a better understanding of the vast powers of life and some cure for his discontent. But his broken interview with the Earth Spirit leaves him still unsatisfied, and he returns to his wretchedness. Easter Day begins to dawn. By the pale light of it he sees on one of his shelves a vial of poison. This suggests to him an end to all his miseries. He takes down the poison, pours it into a crystal goblet, and raises the cup to his lips with a greeting to the dawn.

But just as he is about to drink it, he hears, from a near-by church, an Easter hymn, and along the early air the sound of Easter bells. Memories of happy childhood and boyhood days sweep over him. The goblet drops from his hand.

As the morning advances, Faust with one of his students walks abroad in the village where the Easter feast and merrymaking are in progress. He is greeted on all sides by the villagers. It is evident he is a great and respected man.

In the course of his walk in the village and fields a poodle follows him and, when Faust returns to his study, returns with him. A kind of magic animal it is, for in time it begins to change form; it grows, swells, alters, and finally, out of the mist of transformation, changes into the form of Mephistopheles dressed in the garb of a traveling scholar. Mephistopheles has magic means, it appears, ready at his command, more even than has the learned Doctor Faust. After a discussion with Faust in which Mephistopheles sums up some of his theories of life, he summons spirits to lull Faust to sleep, and makes his escape. When he returns once more, he is arrayed in a scarlet costume and mantle like a man of the world, with a gay cock's feather in his hat. He urges Faust to array himself gayly also and come with him and try what the world is like.

> And I advise thee brief and flat,
> To don the selfsame gay apparel,
> That from this den released and free,
> Life be at last revealed to thee.

He advises Faust no longer to think and ponder as has been his wont; he urges him to give up all his musty books and studies and to learn, rather, what it is to enjoy as the world enjoys. It is, he declares, a plunge into pleasure and gayety that Faust needs to give him a happier view

of life. Let him leave books and reflections behind and come with him.

> Then quick from all reflection flee,
> Come plunge into the world with me.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The little world, and then the great we'll see.

But Faust is scornful of this advice and is sure that the world's pleasures cannot satisfy him. He says, indeed, that were he ever to find a satisfying moment, he could wish that moment were his last.

> If ever I stretch myself calm and composed on a couch be there at once an end of me. If thou canst ever delude me into being pleased with myself, or cheat me with enjoyment, be that day my last. If ever I say to the passing moment, "Stay, thou art so fair," — then may'st thou bind me in thy bonds, and declare my final ruin.

Mephistopheles takes Faust at his word and makes a compact with him on these terms. If ever he can satisfy the soul of Faust, that soul shall be his. The contract is signed and the two start out upon their adventures.

Mephistopheles first takes Faust to Auerbach's cellar, where a band of rough, carousing students drink and make merry. The scene is as coarse as we might have expected Mephistopheles to choose, but from it Faust only turns in disgust.

Mephistopheles then takes Faust to the Witch's Kitchen. Here by means of the witch's magic brew, Faust's youth is restored to him. He feels once more youth's fresh enthusiasms. Here, too, in a magic mirror Faust sees the image of a beautiful woman and lingers before it, but Mephistopheles promises to show him in the flesh one more beautiful still.

From here on, with only one or two breaks, the beautiful and well-known story of Faust and Margaret proceeds. Margaret is a simple girl of the people. Faust sees her first as she comes from church and is charmed with her beauty. Mephistopheles to further the love affair takes Faust to Margaret's chamber while Margaret is not there.

Faust is touched by the quiet loveliness and homelikeness of it, which suggests to him her own purity and simplicity. Mephistopheles brings from under his cloak a box of jewels, which he tells Faust to leave so as to interest and tempt the girl. Faust refuses to do this. It is Mephistopheles himself who hides them in the clothes-press.

Soon after the two have left, Margaret returns. She finds the room sultry and close. It is as though, spiritually, she felt the murky influence and presence of some evil. She finds the

jewels at last, however, and is interested and pleased.

With the help of Margaret's neighbor, Martha, Mephistopheles arranges for the meeting of Faust and Margaret in Martha's garden.

The love story progresses rapidly. At another meeting in Martha's garden, Faust begs to be alllowed to enter Margaret's home that night. But Margaret urges that she dares not allow him; her mother sleeps too lightly. She is overpersuaded at last, however, and is offered a harmless sleeping-potion to be given to her mother. Mephistopheles sees to it that the potion is such that Margaret's mother never wakens from her sleep.

The love story turns now quickly into tragedy. The first victim of the guilty love of Faust and Margaret is the mother; the second is Margaret's brother. He has been maddened by whispered gossip concerning his sister and her lover. He comes by chance on Faust serenading Margaret, challenges him, thrusts at him with his sword, but is killed by Faust. Faust must now flee for his life and Margaret is left to pay the penalty of her sin.

Time passes. In the next scene Mephistopheles, to divert Faust and to make him forget Margaret, takes him to a festival of witches.

But in the midst of the revels Faust thinks he sees a vision of Margaret. He notes that she is pale and falters as she walks. Mephistopheles tries to turn Faust's attention from her, but in a later scene Faust, aware now of the fate and punishment which have befallen Margaret in his absence, demands that Mephistopheles take him to her that he may rescue her from prison.

On magic horses he and Mephistopheles traverse the distance. But they come too late. Too long and too far tried by love and suffering, Margaret's mind wanders. Faust begs her to flee with him, but she remembers their love, dwells on it, and refuses to go. He urges her again. In a scene of the utmost beauty and pathos — one of the great scenes of all literature it is — Faust strives to rescue her from her fate, but, her mind still wandering between the old happiness and the present misery, she refuses to go with him. Mephistopheles comes to urge Faust to leave Margaret to her doom and save himself. Margaret recognizes some evil power in Mephistopheles. She shrinks from him and casts herself upon the judgment and mercy of God and dies. Her last thought is not for herself but for Faust.

Thine am I, Father! rescue me!
Ye angels, holy cohorts, guard me,
Camp around, and from evil ward me!
Henry! I shudder to think of thee.

This ends the First Part of the drama.

THE LARGER WORLD

It should be remembered that Mephistopheles promised Faust that they would "together see the little world and then the great."

The little world we must look upon as the world of Faust's individual passion, emotion, and aspiration. In this little world his love for Margaret, with all the personal emotion and joy and suffering that it brings, is the supreme event. The final result of his personal love and personal selfishness, namely, Margaret's death, is fittingly the end of the entirely personal experience. The rest of Mephistopheles's promise is yet to be fulfilled. Faust is now to see the "great world." He is to see public life with its lives of many men and is to be put in relation to these lives. He is to see that "great world," where the interest and passion which shape society, government, and the development of the human race are set in motion to solve the problem of Faust's destiny.

There is much said of the obscurity of the Second Part of the drama and of the difficulty

of understanding its intricate and subtle meanings. It is difficult to read and understand. That is quite true. But so are the greater world and public life and government and society difficult to understand when we come to deal with them. In youth, when we live only in our own intensely personal world, the happenings and meanings of that world are apt to stand out clear; but when our interests mingle with the great world-interests, with science, government, war, civics, politics, finance, matters of state, and great human enterprise, and when, like Faust, man tries to find among all these things that soul-content which Faust was trying to find, the meanings and interests of this greater world are often enough difficult to understand.

So the Second Part of "Faust," far from being, as some would assert, less great than the first part because it is less clear, is perhaps all the greater in that it deals, not inadequately yet intricately, with those far larger and intricate experiences of a soul whose motives mingle with the larger human life about it.

The following, quoted from Bayard Taylor's introduction to his translation of the second part, is helpful: "The Second Part opens abruptly in a broad, bright crowded world; we not only breathe a new atmosphere, but we come back to

Faust and Mephistopheles as if after a separation of many years, and find that our former acquaintances have changed in the interval, even as ourselves. 'It must be remembered,' says Goethe, 'that the First Part is the development of a somewhat obscure individual condition. It is almost wholly subjective; it is the expression of a confused, restricted, and passionate nature.'" Goethe himself, Taylor continues, "expressly declares that the Second Part of the drama must be performed upon a different, a broader, and more elevated stage of action; that one who has not lived in the world and acquired some experience will not know how to comprehend it; and that, like an involved riddle it will repeatedly allure the reader to the renewed study of its secret meanings." Taylor then asserts very justly that "no commentary can exhaust the suggestiveness of the work. . . . With all that the critics have accomplished, they have still left enough untouched to allow fresh discoveries to every sympathetic reader. There are circles within circles, forms which beckon and then disappear; and when we seem to have reached the bottom of the author's meaning, we suspect that there is still something beyond." Taylor likens the Second Part to "a great mosaic which, looked at near at hand, shows

us the mixture of precious marbles, common pebbles, of glass, jasper, and lapis-lazuli; but seen in the proper perspective, exhibits only the titanic struggle of Man, surrounded with shapes of Beauty and Darkness, toward a victorious immortality." Changing his metaphor he says later: "The reader to whom this book is a new land, must of necessity be furnished with a compass and an outline chart before he enters it. He may otherwise lose his way in its tropical jungles, before reaching that 'peak in Darien' from which Keats, like Balboa, beheld a new side of the world."

It would, indeed, be a mistake to attempt any serious study of the Second Part without a good commentary. For it is frequently difficult, even for the accustomed student, to understand its references and symbols.

Yet when we study the general plan of the Second Part, not in detail but in outline merely, we find that plan not less clear and definite than that of the First Part. Here, too, as there, but on a grander scale, Mephistopheles is shown trying to satisfy Faust; choosing for him experiences which he thinks will give him pleasure; attempting to find for him the moment which Faust shall wish to detain, and in so doing shall forfeit his soul to Mephistopheles.

"The former world is at an end, and after an opening scene which symbolizes the healing influences of Time and Nature, Faust and his companion appear at the court of the German Emperor."

Here Faust is shown by Mephistopheles that part of the greater world which lies in wealth and pleasure and splendor. In a magnificent scene of court masquerade the whole world of folly and pleasure goes by, symbolized in all manner and types of people. Faust, meantime, is given a place of honor at the Emperor's court, while Mephistopheles contents himself with being Court Fool. The realm is in need of money. By means of magic Mephistopheles sets a new financial system on foot. The land becomes suddenly prosperous and Faust and Mephistopheles reap the reward of their power and become important personages at the Emperor's side.

But as mere money and worldly gayety cannot satisfy either the greedy Emperor or the court or Faust, nor the world in general, there arises a new symbol in the drama — a new desire — the desire for Beauty. Faust again by magic means is given the power to summon from the past Beauty, symbolized by Helen of Troy, the most beautiful woman in the world. Here again in symbols is the Renaissance, which is,

strictly speaking, the rebirth or revival of classic beauty.

Goethe devoted much time to the study of the classic forms of art. It is interesting to remember that during his lifetime some of the greatest of the great Greek sculptures were being discovered and restored to the world — the Venus de Milo in 1820, the Victory of Samothrace in 1826, the Discus Thrower in 1792, etc., etc. In 1801, Lord Elgin stirred the art world by removing to England from Greece some of the great and lately discovered Greek marbles.

Just as Goethe himself at one period of his life devoted himself to classic art, so his hero Faust devotes himself to it as symbolized in the person of Helen. But potent as is Beauty, yet it has not the power to satisfy Faust. Helen is at last summoned once more to the lower ancient world, leaving only her mantle in Faust's hand.

Worldly Pleasure, Science, Beauty have failed fully to satisfy Faust. He is now shown the world of Power, War, Glory, State, and Enterprise. But years pass on and none of these things satisfy him.

Then, at last, he throws his interest into a larger plan — a plan for bettering the conditions of his fellowmen. "Enlightened and elevated

above his former self," he is "anxious for a grand and worthy sphere of activity. His aim is to bend nature to the service of man." His plan is to reclaim a wide stretch of land from the ocean which half submerges and wholly threatens it. By draining its poisonous marshes and protecting it from the sea by means of dikes, he intends to make it a place of beauty and health and usefulness to man, "a free land on which may dwell a free people."

A war takes place between two emperors. By magic means Faust gives the advantage to one of these, and then claims as his reward the sea strand which he desires to include in his great enterprise. For the great project really interests him. Here is something worth while to which he can devote his energies, a great work in which he can find satisfaction.

But meantime years have passed. Faust is old. He is smitten with blindness. Though he gives his full energies to the present work for the benefit of others, he knows he cannot complete the task. There is not time. He can only prepare a work for others to finish. Yet even in this he finds comfort. Even though he must die, others will carry on the work and will benefit by it; generation after generation will be the better for this which he has begun. He begins to see the

vision of it — far-reaching and splendid. He urges his workmen on. Here is something that satisfies him. Blind though he is, light floods his spirit. Here is, indeed, "lofty bliss" — this vision in which he sees his work blessing for æons his fellow-beings. In contemplation of it he finds at last a happy moment which he would detain if he could. But even while longing to detain it, his hold on life slackens, loosens, and he dies.

The contract with Mephistopheles is now apparently fulfilled and Mephistopheles claims the soul of Faust. But heavenly messengers dispute the possession of it. For it is not the pleasures which Mephistopheles has offered him, not pleasure of the senses, not worldly power, not these which have satisfied him, rather the striving of Faust's own soul to serve others.

The last scene, like the prologue, is laid in heaven. Margaret, a saved soul, who has long awaited Faust's coming, begs to be allowed to lead Faust's spirit in these, its new and heavenly surroundings. Her request is granted. The drama closes with Faust and Margaret reunited, the pure womanly soul of Margaret leading that of Faust on to higher bliss.

When we study "Faust" carefully, we find many reasons for its greatness, and chief among them its human interest. The very plan of it is

broad and human. To know first the "little world" and then the greater is the experience of every complete life. The "little world" is the world we each know in youth, the world of our own individual and personal interests; the greater world lies rather in those richer years when we attain to deeper knowledge, wider projects, and the service of others. There is something very human, too, in Faust's restless longing and discontent. Do we not all strive and long for personal happiness just as Faust did?

Faust, seeking happiness selfishly, tests and tries life, sins, and learns, and strives. He saves his soul at last not by penance or prayer; rather it is saved by that persistent aspiration which will not let him rest; which prompts him to fling away one experience after another, until he comes at last to the one satisfying thing — self-sacrifice.

Here, indeed, is the keynote to the whole drama. As the "Odyssey" is built about the great need for patience and endurance; as the "Divine Comedy" is built about man's desire and need for justice, so "Faust" is built around that other great human desire and need — unselfishness — the sacrifice of self in service to others.

MAGIC IN THE FAUST STORY

One of the most noticeable *motifs* of the Faust story is that of magic. It is by magic that Mephistopheles accomplishes all his wonderful feats. Faust himself is represented as possessed of magic powers. He, like Mephistopheles, can set aside the law and order of the world and can have things as he himself wishes them.

If one looks for a reason why this *motif* of magic should be used so persistently in this work, it seems clear. In a drama whose key-note is unselfishness, magic stands as a fine and massive symbol of selfishness. For selfishness is in its essence the preference of self above law and order, and law and order represent the rights and benefits of others. It is no uncommon thing for us to pray for what we desire without reference to the good of others; we would, if we could, have some miracle operate for our benefit without regard to the fixed law of God. This, too, is selfishness; but it is the selfishness of desire only. But to Faust, Goethe has given the power to accomplish, by means of Mephistopheles's magic and his own, the fulfillment of such selfish desires. He attains what he wants, without regard to others. He is not only selfish, as so many of us are selfish, in wish, but he has the power

to accomplish his every selfish purpose. Again and again Goethe depicts Faust as the selfish man with the power to carry out his selfishness.

In the very first scene, though he has great powers, they are not used greatly to benefit his fellows. There he does not even remember his humankind, but is wholly absorbed in his own discontent. His is a life richly endowed, which might be of service to others, yet he would end it merely because he is tired of it; and because his longings are unsatisfied. His love for Margaret is not less selfish, for, though in the forest scene he foresees the ruin he will bring upon her, he cannot deny himself for her sake. He would have her for himself, in his own manner, without regard to the suffering he is to bring her. Later, his success and power at court are won not as others would have to win these — by patient striving. Here, too, power, beauty, knowledge are his by magic and selfish means. All these things must come to him magically, imperiously, as he, Faust, wishes them.

This "magic," this desire to set aside universal law for the sake of personal benefit, is a thing common enough in the experience of the race. We see it in our great industries, in our body politic; it cannot be said to be absent from our churches and creeds; it is that in power, legal or

illegal, which gives the few and influential and chosen the greatest benefit, which seems to set aside, temporarily at least, the great workings of natural and divine laws for the operation of human and personal ones; it is that human selfishness of mind and intellect, as well as of heart, which would have things to be as it wishes them to be, regardless of truth and the rights of others.

In Goethe's wide knowledge of life he must have seen this again and again, and he exemplified it in his hero Faust. Even almost to the very last selfishness crops out in Faust. Even in planning his scheme for the benefit of others, he deprives (and it is again by magic) an aged couple of their home because it happens to stand on a piece of ground which he needs for his great project and also *which he needs for his own pleasure*. He wants it for himself, you note. He offers to build a better house elsewhere, it is true, for these two, but they prefer the little old hut with its cherished memories. Their happiness lies here, but the happiness of the aged couple, Philemon and Baucis, and their natural attachment to their own home, do not weigh with Faust. He is petulant, impatient, because they will not sell the land to him. The bell from their ancient chapel frets, annoys him, angers him: —

Accursed chime! . . .

. . . . . .

The bell proclaims with envious bluster,
My grand estate lacks full design:
The brown old hut, the linden cluster,
The crumbling chapel *are not mine.*"

At this point, Mephistopheles, returning from sea plunder, finds Faust sunk in gloomy envy of the linden trees and the brown hut that are not his. He wants the linden trees for himself that he may look out over what he has accomplished and may have a better view of it.

The old ones, there, should make concession;
A shady seat I would create:
The lindens, not my own possession,
Disturb my joy in mine estate.
There would I for a view unbaffled
From bough to bough erect a scaffold, etc., etc.

Mephistopheles says to him, "Why be annoyed when you have the power to do as you choose?" Why should not Faust simply exert that power and remove this old couple who stand in the way of his pleasure? Faust bids Mephistopheles go and "clear them out" and set them in a better place he has chosen for them.

But like most of his selfishness this, too, ends in disaster. The old couple, roughly treated by Mephistopheles and his servants, die and the home catches fire and burns to the ground.

FAUST'S SELFISHNESS

Faust has lived selfishly; he has tested life and always with one thing in view — his own happiness. So he has continued for years, many years, for he is old now. Yet in this supremely human and selfish Faust, there is one great redeeming quality: Faust is selfish but never does his selfishness satisfy him. Always it brings him discontent or wretchedness, or repentance or suffering. Humanly he returns to his selfishness again and again, but he never rests in it.

At last, after many years of selfish living he becomes wholly interested in a great plan for the benefit of others; at last he despises his own selfishness; at last he renounces magic and longs to escape from the trammels of it:

> If I could banish Magic's fell creations,
> And totally unlearn the incantations.

Care visits him, breathes upon his eyes and blinds him. But in his very blindness an inner spiritual light begins to dawn in him: —

> The Night seems deeper now to press around me,
> But in my inmost spirit all is light.

His whole desire now is to see his great plan carried out, if may be, before death overtakes

him. The waves are to be stayed, a vast marshy plain is to be drained to furnish a fair, free soil to many men. He seems to see now by the inner spiritual light that neither beauty nor magic nor worldly power nor selfishness can ever satisfy him, but only that which is now his supreme desire — service to others. Here is the sacrifice of all his old imperious self, and in that sacrifice Faust finds his happy moment.

The drama is all the stronger, the more human, because this theme of self-sacrifice is not set out in any morbid way. The self-sacrifice of Faust is on a big, not a petty scale. His unselfishness is attended by no personal suffering or tragedy. When we compare it, for instance, with the magnificent self-sacrifice of Prometheus in the old Greek legend, it seems a lesser thing. Yet not lesser, perhaps, rather only a less passionate thing; and if not so stirring, yet not less in its human interest. Faust's self-sacrifice is, one may say, the conclusion of all his experience, the verdict of his intellect; the result of all his testing; the summing-up of all his philosophy; the crown and hard-earned knowledge of a long life. Old, Faust has come to this knowledge; weary, he has come to this restful truth; blind, he has attained to this vision — that in service to others and in it alone can the soul find content.

THE THEME OF THE MARGARET STORY

As in the "Odyssey" the story of Penelope is in beautiful harmony with that of Ulysses, as she in her woman's way practices, as he does in the manner of a man, endurance and patience, so here, the story of Margaret is in exquisite harmony with that of Faust. Margaret is indeed one of the most appealing and beautiful characters in literature; and this largely because she is so human. She is humanly selfish, too. She, too, like Faust, would have her own desire fulfilled even when that desire goes counter to her duty, to the law, and to the rights of others. She would have her own way — and uses unlawful means to attain it. The watchful mother would, she knows, prevent her meeting with Faust, so she gives her the sleeping-potion. She wins her desire, not by reason, not by conforming or deserving, but by trick and a sleeping-potion, a kind of lesser magic. It is by this means that she surmounts the lawful obstacle to their love — that she and Faust may have their desire.

But Margaret attains to unselfishness sooner than Faust. There is an unselfishness in her love not noticeable in his. However much she, like him, disregards the rights of others, she is at least unselfish toward Faust. It comes to her

with a sense of strangeness that her intense love of Faust could have brought about sin toward others: —

> And now a living sin am I!
> Yet all that drove my heart thereto,
> God! was so good, so dear, so true.

Margaret has a keener sense of the rights of others than has Faust. She conforms to law as he does not. She is under its ban. When the final test comes, when Faust arrives with magic horses that wait outside, and tries to persuade her to escape her penalty, not even he whom she loves more than all in the world can break down her resolve. Through the pitiful darkness in which her mind wanders there shine some clearer reason and sanity of the spirit. She refuses to quit her doom. She pays the full penalty.

Margaret learns early that sacrifice of self which comes to Faust only when he is old. At the end of the second part we find that throughout the long years she has loved Faust as truly as ever. In the heaven to which his soul is at last carried she awaits him. Stealing closer to the Mater Gloriosa she prays: —

> Incline, O Maiden,
> With Mercy laden,
> In light unfading,
> Thy gracious countenance upon my bliss!

My loved, my lover,
His trials over
In yonder world, returns to me in this!

She would have him share the heavenly bliss she enjoys: —

Vouchsafe to me that I instruct him!
Still dazzles him the Day's new glare.

Her prayer is granted by the Mater Gloriosa: —

Rise thou to higher spheres! Conduct him!
His soul aware of thee shall follow there.

As the first scene in Faust's study gives the impression of something dark, of a soul solitary and unhappy by reason of a kind of selfish discontent, the impression left with us in the last scene is that of light, a soul made one of the company of the blessed and attaining the joy of heavenly companionship.

This drama is wonderfully conceived, magnificently carried out — a memorable massive work of art. But these things alone would not suffice to make it one of the greatest books in the world. Underlying these must be some great human and spiritual truth, some human ideal, to give it its human appeal. Unselfishness, however we may individually fail of it, is one of the ideals of the human race; to merge the interests

of self into the general good is one of the great lasting human ideals and desires. And it is around this ideal and this desire that Goethe's "Faust" is written, through this mainly that it touches us; largely by means of this that it holds our interest so lastingly.

All of us who have struggled as did Ulysses, enduringly and with patience against heavy odds, will find ourselves friends to Ulysses; for us the "Odyssey" was written. All of us who have longed or striven for justice, who have watched the beautiful and awful workings of God's unfailing laws, will find ourselves companions to Dante. And, not less, all of us who have with human selfishness enjoyed many benefits and experiences of life, only to find at last that joy lies not in living for one's self but in service to others, will find ourselves bound with strong bonds to the hero of Goethe's great drama, will find ourselves, as it were, understanding brothers to Faust.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

I therefore arose, and, having closed the shop, proceeded with her in security until we arrived at the house; and I found it to be a mansion displaying evident signs of prosperity: its door was adorned with gold and silver and ultramarine, and upon it were inscribed these two verses: —

O mansion, may mourning never enter thee, nor fortune act treacherously to thine owner!
An excellent mansion to every guest art thou when other places are strait unto him.

"The Story of Mohammed Ali," *The Arabian Nights.*

Spirit! the Fairy said,
And pointed to the gorgeous dome,
This is a wondrous sight
And mocks all human grandeur;
. . . . . Spirit, come!
This is thine high reward: — the past shall rise;
Thou shalt behold the present; I will teach
The secrets of the future.

SHELLEY.

IT is generally believed that the stories comprising the "Arabian Nights" were collected under that title in Arabia about the twelfth century. Yet we know that many of the tales date further back than that. The origin of some of them may be traced to China, India, Persia, Greece of a far earlier date. But whatever the origin of the tales, the flavor of them as we find them collected in the "Arabian Nights" is dis-

tinctly Arabian. The characters are Mohammedans, most of them, and the cities described are generally those of Arabia and Egypt. The times in which the stories are placed are times of much luxury and splendor, and of vivid and colored superstitions. The tales are of a country semi-barbarous, and there is a consistent and splendid exaggeration running through them. In them we find kings of such wealth and power that they may carry out any conceivable royal whim. The chief king told of is one who takes a new wife each day and has wives and subjects put to death at will. Every circumstance and happening is as far as possible from the circumstance and happening of our own lives. We have never known people who had the power or habits of these people, nor are we likely to, yet we read of them with enchantment. The book has a world-wide fame, has been translated into almost every tongue, and is readily admitted to be one of the great books of the world.

THE STORY OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

The main story of the "Arabian Nights" starts out in the old fairy-tale "once-upon-a-time" manner. "There was in ancient times a king." There follows then the story of the king's two sons, and especially of the eldest, Shahriar.

From observation, as well as from a bitter experience of his own, Shahriar came to believe that all women were tricky and unfaithful. Having put his wife to death for her unfaithfulness, he determined to take no chances with future ones. Each day he chose a new wife and each morning after her wedding-night she, too, was beheaded. So he did and continued to do, until the people raised an outcry and fled with their daughters so that none of marriageable age were left save only the two daughters of the king's vizier, or prime minister.

So when the king sent for his vizier and demanded that another wife be brought him, the vizier was overcome with woe, dreading that Sheherazade and Dinarzade, his two daughters, be sacrificed to the king's wishes. But Sheherazade, the elder, fearlessly begged to be given to the king in marriage, and would not be gainsaid. Now Sheherazade was not only of rare beauty, but of rare intellect as well; for to her were known many books of histories and lives of kings and stories of past generations and the works of the poets. She had collected, too, it is said, many books.

Sheherazade's request was granted. She was dressed to go to the king, but before departing she gave this message to her younger sister:

"When I have gone to the king's chamber I shall send and request you to come to me. This you shall do; then when you have the chance, you shall ask me to relate some strange story to beguile the time."

Everything happened as she had directed. Weeping, Sheherazade begged the king to allow her to bid good-bye to Dinarzade. Dinarzade was sent for and remained for a time, and presently, as had been agreed upon, begged Sheherazade to relate some tale to beguile the time. Sheherazade asked if she might do so; and the king, being restless, and pleased, too, with the idea of listening to a story, bade her begin.

The story that Sheherazade told was of such interest and wonder that the king listened willingly enough. The last of the tale, however, led skilfully into still another quite as wonderful or even more so. And the king's interest was piqued, and he asked her what that tale might be, so she related that also. And each tale led always so cunningly into another that always the king wished to hear the next story and bade Sheherazade relate it. So there was, indeed, never an end to the stories. Day followed day: and for a thousand and one nights Sheherazade related the wonderful tales.

Now Sheherazade, in the time that had passed, had borne the king three children.

And when she had ended these tales, she rose upon her feet and kissed the ground before the king, and said to him:

"O king of the time, and incomparable one of the age and period, verily I am thy slave, and during a thousand and one nights I have related to thee the history of the preceding generations, and the admonitions of the people of former times; then have I any claim upon thy majesty, so that I may request of thee to grant me a wish?"

And the King answered her,

"Request; thou shalt receive, O Sheherazade."

So thereupon she called out to the nurses and the eunuchs, and said to them: —

"Bring ye my children."

Accordingly, they brought them to her quickly — and they were three male children: one of them walked, and one crawled, and one was at the breast. And when they brought them she took them and placed them before the King, and, having kissed the ground said: —

"O King of the age, these are thy children, and I request of thee that thou exempt me from slaughter, as a favor to these infants; for if thou slay me, these infants will become without a mother, and will not find among women one who will rear them well."

And thereupon the King wept, and pressed his children to his bosom, and said: —

"O Sheherazade, by Allah, I pardoned thee before the coming of these children, because I saw thee to be chaste, pure, ingenious, pious. May God bless thee, and thy father and thy mother, and thy root and thy branch! I call

God to witness against me that I have exempted thee from everything that might injure thee."

So Sheherazade rose up, glad that her device of the marvelous tales had spared not only her own life, but also the lives of those who, but for her ingenuity, would have suffered with her the doom of the king's displeasure.

She kissed his hands and his feet, and rejoiced with exceeding joy; and she said to him: "May God prolong thy life and increase thy dignity and majesty."

Then joy spread through the palace of the King, until it became diffused throughout the city, and it was a night not to be reckoned among lives. . . . The King rose in the morning happy. . . . He conferred robes of honor upon all the viziers and emirs and lords of the empire, and gave orders to decorate the city thirty days. . . . So they decorated the city in a magnificent manner, the like of which had not been seen before, and the drums were beaten and the pipes were sounded, and all the performers of sports exhibited their arts and the King rewarded them munificently. . . . He bestowed alms, also, upon the poor and needy, and extended his generosity to all his subjects and all the people of his dominions.

REAL AND UNREAL IN THE STORIES

This is the main story from which all the other tales depend. It is on this thread, as it were, that are strung all those gems of stories so long famous — the individual tales of the

"Thousand and One Nights' Entertainment." Not all these are equally great. Some shine with a lesser luster; some are flecked with flaws; but at intervals one finds almost perfect gems of stories, such as "Gulnare of the Sea," "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp," "The City of Brass," "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," "Rose in Bloom," and many more. These, like barbaric gems, show an almost barbaric beauty and reflect, as from a hundred facets, the light and beauty and glint of days rich in magnificence, old and full of ancient splendor.

When we come to study the stories, we find in them a curious mixture of the real and unreal. We find jinns and genii, fairies and magic of all kinds mingled with the most commonplace happenings of daily life in Cairo or Bagdad. If by reason of the magic happenings in them these may sometimes be classed almost as fairy-tales, yet they are fairy-tales woven ingeniously with the lives of real men and women. The women in the stories are especially real and true to life. It is to be noted, too, that they are, for the most part, clever, womanly, ingenious. Sheherazade herself is the supreme type. She not only has all these thousand and one stories at her command, but is represented as relating them in such a fashion as to hold the attention

and interest and waken the love of a man who had lost faith in his world.

The story of Sheherazade is, in short, the story of a woman who saves herself and others from a dire fate by her cleverness and ingenuity. Not only is ingenuity the keynote of her own story, but again and again we see it to be the keynote of the stories she tells. Often the plot is ingenious; more often the characters are ingenious. Marjaneh, the devoted slave girl of Ali Baba, whose ingenuity saves him from the forty thieves, is a kind of younger Sheherazade. She, too, has the gift of wit and invention and imagination and ingenuity.

In King Shahriar's praise of Sheherazade (and I ask you to note this very especially) he calls her chaste, pure, pious, and *ingenious*. Ingenuity is held up as a virtue, along with the rest.

When we come to examine *ingenuity*, as it is set out in the "Arabian Nights," we find it to be a faculty for cleverness and invention, the using of common means to uncommon ends.

THE STORIES FINELY IMAGINED

The stories themselves are inventive, ingenious, finely imagined; marvels are made out of the mere commonplaces of life; splendors invented out of nothing; in the story of Aladdin, an old

lamp which the mother of Aladdin scrubs with a mere handful of sand to get it clean of dirt and tarnish — a homely, everyday kind of task — proves itself by the process to be what but a magic affair. A genie, the "slave of the Lamp," appears out of that homely rubbing, — a genie able to give to the owner of the lamp the fulfillment of any wish whatsoever.

But note that here are real people. She is an exceedingly real person, this mother of Aladdin, extraordinarily human, one of the real characters of literature; only in the "Arabian Nights" do such things happen to such people in such wonderful and unheard-of fashion. A splendor, never quite seen even in that splendid age and country, lights up the pages of the book. One finds often that the descriptions of marvelous wealth or beauty or festivity or joy are followed by the phrase "the like of which hath not been seen." In the rejoicing of King Shahriar and Sheherazade we read, "and it was a night not to be reckoned among lives." In the story of the "City of Brass," one of the most gloomy and glorious and splendid stories in the wide world, we have pictures and records of fabulous wealth; "treasures such as the kings of the earth were unable to procure."

These stories were told not only to King

Shahriar; in the ages since, they have been told by Eastern story-tellers and others to thousands upon thousands of real people and they tell of real people and real happenings. It is wonderful how they bring before us again and again the very streets of Cairo, the bazaars of Bagdad, the fruits of Samarcand. It is all intensely real, yet at the same time keyed above real life; something over and above reality, — "the like of which hath not been seen."

In the story of Aladdin Abushamat, there is a picture of exquisite reality in the description of Aladdin and his wife Zobeide the lute-player. After they have partaken of the supper Zobeide has prepared, Aladdin begs her to play for him, and she plays — "the sounds of the chords vying with the voice of David." Then, while they are full of "delight and jesting and mirth and gladness," there comes the knock at the door.

She therefore said to him: "Arise, and see who is at the door."

Accordingly, he went down, and, opening the door, found four dervishes standing there, and he said to them: "What do you desire?"

"Oh, my master," answered one of them . . . "the food of our souls consisteth in music and in the delicacies of poetry, and we desire to recreate ourselves with thee this night . . . for we are passionately fond of music, and

there is not one among us who doth not retain in his memory odes and other pieces of poetry and lyric songs."

Aladdin replied: "I must consult."

And he went up and informed the damsel and she said to him: —

"Open the door to them."

So he opened to them the door.

The dervishes are conducted by Aladdin to the upper chamber and food is offered them. We can see Zobeide's music-loving hands busy at the hospitable task. But the dervishes decline to eat, their hunger being only, they declare, for music.

"We just now heard some pleasant music in thine abode; but when we came up it ceased; and we would that we knew whether she who was performing is a white or black slave girl, or a lady."

Aladdin replied: "She is my wife."

The whole thing is so simple, so real, one would suspect it to be nothing more than a story of real life. Aladdin and Zobeide are like friends we have known well. We find them there in the story happy, at home, devoted to each other, and entertaining themselves with music against the coming of the stars. Then the knock of those who have heard the music and wish to enjoy it too. Well, this is even in the "Arabian Nights" a somewhat unusual thing to happen and not to be taken too lightly, so Aladdin must consult

Zobeide. The whole scene has the air of friendly reality. The dervishes are asked in. Aladdin, as the conversation becomes more intimate, confides to them, at last, a family dilemma in which he finds himself, which is this: He is to pay his father-in-law ten thousand pieces of gold as Zobeide's wedding dower — and has not wherewith to pay it. So the scene develops, still a real scene among real people. Only, one of the dervishes, the chief dervish, is no dervish at all, it appears; but is, indeed, as it turns out, the great Caliph Haroun el Raschid, who, wearying of his state, has put on this dervish disguise that he may mingle unknown with the common people and entertain himself with their interests and opinions. He promises Aladdin that the gold shall be paid and bids him not grieve.

But from here the wonders begin, and from here on increase, multiplying like domes and minarets in a dream. The "fairy" quality comes in. Even the death of Zobeide, later in the story, is annulled by a friendly princess with fairy powers, and these people whom we found in the first of the story entertaining themselves in so natural and almost homely a fashion in the evening after the day's duties, we now behold seated on a magic sofa which carries them through the air wheresoever they wish.

This is all very typical, very characteristic of these tales. Simplicity and reality — then flying couches, magic lamps, magic horses, jewels as large as eggs and plentiful as fruit, magic dinners brought from nowhere on gold and silver plate; suddenly the real has bloomed into the unreal, the commonplace into the extraordinary.

An almost better example is to be found in the story of "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp."

Aladdin is the son of a poor tailor and has been a "scatter-brained scapegrace from his birth." In his tenth year he is apprenticed to his father to learn the trade of tailoring. But nothing can avail to break him of his idle habits. At his father's death the boy's widowed mother sells the shop and subsists by spinning. So things go on until Aladdin is fifteen. The description of the boy is complete. He is a real boy, idle, yet not altogether unlovable, playing with the ragamuffins in the street, coming home only to meals, careless, thoughtless, selfish. In the few paragraphs given over to the beginning of the tale the character of the boy and his mother are drawn "to the life." Throughout the entire story is preserved the entirely human quality, and the reality of the characters loses nothing by the later miraculous happenings. Aladdin him-

self is like another we have met. The mother of Aladdin, like Marjaneh the slave girl, is one of the *real* people in books.

But it is not long before there appears on the commonplace scene the sorcerer from Barbary, who pretends to be the uncle of the boy Aladdin so as to win him to his own uses and purposes, and to make a cat's-paw of him for the securing of certain vast treasure.

There follow then these fantastic, wonderful passages concerning the subterranean gardens in which Aladdin finds himself: —

He went down into the garden, where he began to marvel at the trees with the birds on their branches singing the praises of their glorious Creator. And though he had not noticed it when he entered, these trees were all covered with precious stones instead of fruit, and each tree was of a different kind and had different jewels, of all colours, and the brilliance of these jewels paled the sun's rays at noontide. [Note this also:] *And the size of each stone surpassed description, so that none of the kings of the world possessed any like the largest or half the size of the least of them.* And Aladdin walked among the trees and gazed upon them and on these things which dazzled the sight and bewildered the mind, and as he examined them he perceived that instead of ordinary fruit the yield was of big jewels, emeralds and diamonds, and rubies and pearls, and other precious stones, such as to bewilder the understanding. But as he had never seen such things in his life, and had not reached mature years so as to know the value

of such jewels (for he was still a little boy), he imagined that these jewels were all of glass or crystal. And he gathered pockets full of them, and began to examine whether they were ordinary fruit, like figs and grapes and other like eatables; but when he saw that they were of glass (knowing nothing of precious stones), he put some of each kind that grew on the trees into his pockets and finding them of no use for food, he said in his mind: "I will gather these glass fruits and play with them at home." So he began plucking them and stuffing them into his pockets until they were full.

After this come the accounts of all those still more wonderful and astounding experiences which have so long delighted so many: Innumerable riches; magic slaves who appear at the rubbing of a ring or lamp and fulfill for Aladdin every wish of his heart; vast palaces upreared as easily, transported, removed, recovered, by means as facile as extraordinary.

But all this, you say, is a kind of meaningless extravaganza. No; hardly. A mere meaningless extravaganza could not have held the attention of generations of men and women. We must look still deeper.

When we seek for some clear ethical or moral purpose in the tales, we find very little of it. The stories of the "Arabian Nights" are not, either in their general plot or in their happening,

moral in any strict sense; they do not point out any grave moral duty or spiritual obligation. Too often, indeed, the craft and means of success practiced in them are condemnable according to our code. There is, it is true, a kind of moral philosophy evident throughout them and a continual reiteration of the necessity of submitting to the will of God.

In the story of the "City of Brass," the famous inscription, the magnificent admonition, on the sepulchre of the dead king is impressive, setting out as it does the powerlessness of riches as against the power of God. He bids his readers as earnestly as ever Solomon did to look upon the world as vanity.

> Confide not in it, nor incline to it; for it will betray him who dependeth upon it, and who in his affairs relieth upon it. Fall not in its snares, nor cling to its skirts.

Then he proceeds to prove his words with a recital of his own experience:—

> For I possessed four thousand bay horses in a stable; and I married a thousand damsels of the daughters of kings, high-bosomed virgins, like moons; and I was blessed with a thousand children, like stern lions; and I lived a thousand years, happy in mind and heart; and I amassed riches such as the kings of the regions of the earth were unable to procure, and imagined that my enjoyments would continue without failure. But I was not aware when there

alighted among us the terminator of delights and the separator of companions, the desolator of abodes, and the ravager of inhabited mansions, the destroyer of the great and the small, and the infants, and the children, and the mothers. We had resided in this palace in security until the event decreed by the Lord of all creatures, the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the earth, befell us, and the thunder of the manifest truth assailed us, and there died of us every day two, till a great company of us had perished. So when I saw that destruction had entered our dwellings and had alighted among us, and drowned us in the sea of deaths, I summoned a writer, and ordered him to write these verses, and admonitions, and lessons, and caused them to be engraved upon these doors, and tablets, and tombs. I had an army comprising a thousand bridles, composed of hardy men, with spears, and coats of mail, and sharp swords, and strong arms; and I ordered them to clothe themselves with the long coats of mail, and to hang on the keen swords, and to place in the rest the terrible lances, and mount the high-blooded horses. Then, when the event appointed by the Lord of all creatures, the Lord of all the earth and the heavens, befell us, I said, "O companies of troops and soldiers, can ye prevent that which hath befallen me from the Mighty King?" But the soldiers and troops were unable to do so, and they said, "How shall we contend against him from whom none hath secluded, the Lord of the door that hath no door-keeper?" — So I said, "Bring me the wealth." (And it was contained in a thousand pits, in each of which were a thousand hundredweights of red gold, and in them were varieties of pearls and jewels, and there was the like quantity of white silver, with treasures such as the kings of the earth were unable to procure.) And they did so; and when they had brought

the wealth before me, I said to them, "Can ye deliver me by means of all these riches, and purchase for me therewith one day during which I may remain alive?" But they could not do so. They resigned themselves to fate and destiny, and I submitted to God with patient endurance of fate and affliction until he took my soul, and made me to dwell in my grave. And if thou ask concerning my name, I am Kosh the son of Sheddad the son of Ad the Greater.

Even more impressive because touched with a greater pity are the inscriptions in the palace of Tadmore, the dead queen in the same story. Death has rarely been drawn so impressively and in the midst of such splendor. Here is a tale not unlike that of the Sleeping Beauty, but, unlike the sleep of a hundred years that was brought on in that story by the prick of a bodkin and the spite of a neglected fairy, the sleep that has fallen over the palace in this more somber tale is the one that to all eternity shall know no waking. It would be hard to match anywhere in literature the combined splendor and gloom of the whole recital. The explorers of the City of Brass have come to the palace and find inscribed these verses: —

Consider a people who decorated their abodes, and in the dust have become pledged for their actions.

They built, but their buildings availed not; and treasured, but their wealth did not save them when the term had expired.

How often they hoped for what was not decreed them!
But they passed to the graves, and hope did not profit them;

. . . . . .

Where are the thrones, and the crowns, and the apparel?
Where are the faces which were veiled and curtained, and on which, for their beauty, proverbs were composed?
And the grave plainly answered the inquirer for them, As to the cheeks, the rose is gone from them, etc.

And this: —

They led troops in multitudes, and collected riches; and they left their wealth and buildings, and departed
To the narrow graves, and laid down in the dust; and there they have remained, pledged for their actions;
As if the company of travellers had put down their baggage during the night in a house where was no food for guests,
And its owner had said to them, "O people, there is not any lodging for you in it." So they packed after alighting,
And they all thereupon became fearful and timid;

The visitors come at last through splendid halls and passages to the great room where the queen herself lies buried.

They then passed on, and found a saloon constructed of polished marble adorned with jewels. The beholder imagined that upon its floor was running water, and if any one walked upon it he would slip. The Emir Mousa therefore ordered the Sheikh Abdelsamad to throw upon it something, that they might be enabled to walk on it; and

he did this, and contrived so that they passed on. And they found in it a great dome constructed of stones gilded with red gold. The party had not beheld, in all that they had seen, anything more beautiful than it. And in the midst of that dome was a great dome-crowned structure of alabaster, around which were lattice windows, decorated, and adorned with oblong emeralds, such as none of the kings could procure. In it was a pavilion of brocade, raised upon columns of red gold, and within this were birds, the feet of which were of emeralds; beneath each bird was a net of brilliant pearls, spread over a fountain; and by the brink of the fountain was placed a couch adorned with pearls, and jewels, and jacinths, whereon was a damsel resembling the shining sun. Eyes had not beheld one more beautiful. . . . When the Emir Mousa beheld this damsel, he wondered extremely at her loveliness, and was confounded by her beauty, and the redness of her cheeks, and the blackness of her hair. Any beholder would imagine that she was alive, and not dead. And they said to her, "Peace be to thee, O damsel!" But Taleb the son of Sahl said to the emir, "May God amend thy state! Know that this damsel is dead. There is no life in her. How, then, can she return the salutation?" . . . Upon this the Emir Mousa said, "Extolled be the perfection of God, who has subdued his servants by death!" And as to the couch upon which was the damsel, it had steps, and upon the steps were two slaves, one of them white and the other black; and in the hand of one of them was a weapon of steel, and in the hand of the other a jeweled sword that blinded the eyes; and before the two slaves was a tablet of gold, whereon was read an inscription, which was this:

"In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful, Praise be to God, the Creator of man; and He is the Lord

of lords, and the Cause of causes. . . . Knowest thou not that death hath called for thee, and hath advanced to seize thy soul? Be ready, then, for departure, and make provision in the world; for thou wilt quit it soon. Where is Adam, the father of mankind? Where are Noah and his offspring? Where are the sovereign kings and Cæsars? Where are the kings of India and Irak? Where are the kings of the regions of the earth? Where are the Amalekites? Where are the mighty monarchs? The mansions are void of their presence, and they have quitted their families and homes. Where are the kings of the foreigners and the Arabs? . . . O thou, if thou know me not, I will acquaint thee with my name and my descent. I am Tadmor, the daughter of the King of the Amalekites, of those who ruled the countries with equity. I possessed what none of the kings possessed, and ruled with justice, and acted impartially toward my subjects: I gave and bestowed, and I lived a long time in the enjoyment of happiness and an easy life, and emancipated female and male slaves. Thus I did until the summoner of death came to my abode, and disasters occurred before me. And the case was this: Seven years in succession came upon us, during which no water descended on us from heaven, nor did any grass grow for us on the face of the earth. So we ate what food we had in our dwellings, and after that we fell upon the beasts and ate them, and there remained nothing. Upon this, therefore, I caused the wealth to be brought, and meted it with a measure, and sent it by trusty men, who went about with it through all the districts, not leaving unvisited a single large city, to seek for some food. But they found it not; and they returned to us with the wealth, after a long absence. So thereupon we exposed to view our riches and our treasures, locked the gates of the

fortresses in our city, and submitted ourselves to the decree of our Lord, committing our case to our Master; and thus we all died, as thou beholdest, and left what we had built and what we had treasured. This is the story: and after the substance there remaineth not aught save the vestige."

Fatalism is evident throughout the stories. God is extolled as the All-Merciful but equally as the All-Powerful, against whose ruling no man may contend. The gloomy fatalism not less than the rich imagery and materialism of the more colored Eastern religion is inwoven in the whole fabric.

The more we study the stories, the more we find "other times, other manners." Indeed, the customs and manners among which these tales are laid are so entirely foreign to our own that without earnest study we can have little or no grasp or understanding of them. Why is it, then, that in country after country, among people of all classes, rich and poor, lettered and unlettered, this is reckoned one of the really great books, and is read and reread untiringly?

THE INVENTION OF SHEHERAZADE

In looking for some of the reasons underlying its greatness, I would recall to you again that the king spoke of Sheherazade as chaste, pious, and *ingenious; inventive,* that is, cleverly *inventive.*

Her own dealing with the king is a consummate piece of cleverness. The plot for trapping his interest and averting his displeasure is thoroughly ingenious, inventive. It is not by argument, not by pleading, but by ingenuity that she takes facts ugly enough in themselves and turns and handles and remoulds them to another and even lovely fashion. What was to be a sordid and ugly thing is turned by her ingenuity, and her imaginative woman's mind, by her witty invention, into a thing actually delightful. The morrow of her wedding night was to have been a day of slaughter; instead, at the end of one thousand and one nights of extended pleasure and entertainment, we find herself and the king established in a lasting happiness. Her plan is a sufficiently daring one. There is a kind of gentle pathos, as well, in the circumstance. A woman, frail in herself and powerless in the eyes of the world, doomed to a dire fate, forgets that doom and causes the king to forget it by means of mere invention and imagination. Picture after picture she brings before the mind's eye of the king. Tale after tale is told, time passes, and the doom is forgotten.

It is, after all, this main story of Sheherazade herself which has a meaning and beauty in it which seems to outshine the rest. Many com-

mentators give it scant attention, and look on it as a mere "framework" for the other tales and a kind of excuse for the telling of them. Boccaccio uses the plague which afflicted the fair city of Florence in 1348 as the "framework" for the stories in his "Decameron." A company of men and women go into the country to escape the plague and there dwell, making merry and telling the tales that go to make up the book. In the same way Chaucer uses the journey of a company of pilgrims to the shrine of à Becket at Canterbury for the tales told in the "Canterbury Pilgrims." And many look upon the story of Sheherazade as not more — a mere framework in which the other stories are inclosed.

But it is much more than that. It is, after all, Sheherazade's voice which is heard throughout all the stories. It is her personality and hers only which we remember in connection with the telling of them. It is she who tells us the tales; and her memory and imagination and invention color them. The whole plan of the telling them is hers.

It is, then, in the character of Sheherazade that we are most likely to find the clue or reason we are looking for. She is a person lovely, chaste, ingenious, inventive, imaginative. It is in these

qualities and most of all in that of imagination that we shall find the *motif* of the stories.

Now imagination is the power of imagery, of producing by one means or another a mental picture of something not as it exists, but as we *would have it exist*. It is that faculty which most distinguishes man from the brute creation. For man can imagine himself some one else, — can imagine events other than they are, and can by words and other means project his images on the understanding of others. He can by this faculty picture things and events not only as they are, but as they have been; can summon up the past, or he can picture the future as it might be, or as he for the moment desires it to be, and can in this fashion show it to his fellow-creatures.

No magic in the "Arabian Nights" seems quite so magical and wonderful as this. Man can in this way create a world for himself which, while it is founded on the happenings and events of the established world, yet differs from it. It is creation on a small scale.

In this man's world of images or imagination, the great natural laws and events of the real world are set aside at will and without ado. Seas unsailable, mountains impassable, are passed over, sailed over in any fashion man may choose: a flying carpet; a sofa endowed with powers to

glide through the air; palaces which in the real world would take years and incalculable labour to construct are upraised, as by Aladdin, by the mere rubbing of an old lamp. Difficulties insurmountable in real life are overcome with what ease. Here, man, with what splendid daring, takes up life in his hands like a crystal ball, turns it to catch whatever light he likes, gazes into it, and sees life not as it really is, too vast for his understanding, forever beyond his hold, but rather as if within his grasp, subject to his control — the very heavens and earth reflected and held in the palms and hollow of his two hands.

THE ROOT OF ALL ROMANCE

It is a thing of some dignity, this gift, this power of imaging and imagining. It is the very root of all romance. It is the thing which, when reality presses too hard upon him, makes life livable to man yet awhile. He imagines things other than they are; pictures them in happier fashion; makes good out of evil, and builds happiness on the ruins of unhappiness.

The thing goes far into human nature. Feeling about for the underlying meaning of these great books, we begin to touch once more in this one some of the deep humanities. Seeking below the surface for their clearer meaning

we come upon those inexhaustible springs of human action which feed all the rivers of our lives.

We have said that great books are always written around experiences common to all men, common to humanity at large, not to any one class. The "Arabian Nights" is written around that faculty for imagining which is common to us all and which is as old as the race. The escape from the real to the contemplation of the desirable has rested many a soul before it satisfied yours and mine. It is the native habit of children; and it has been the comfort of young and old since ever young men have dreamed dreams and old men have seen visions. Here in this almost divine faculty is the very abode of that True Romance of which Kipling sings with so much understanding and devotion: —

> Thy face is far from this our war —
> . . . . . .
> Enough for me in dreams to see
> And touch thy garment's hem;
> Thy feet have trod so near to God
> I may not follow them.

On and on in those wonderful verses of his, which should be known by all who love life and the romance and beauty of it, he apostrophizes the True Romance. The better he knows her the

more he loves her. All that is fair in life beyond man's material needs, each stroke of toil and fight, each hope for which men have died, has come from her. It is she who has taught "all lovers speech," who has endowed life with all its mystery, who has existed before the world was, who has given us a name for our beliefs. Hers is the power to lead us on to high ends and to victory; as hers it is to comfort those who fail.

> Thou art the voice to kingly boys
> To lift them through the fight,
> And Comfortress of Unsuccess
> To give the dead good-night.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Oh Charity, all patiently
> Abiding wrack and scaith!
> Oh Faith, that meets ten thousand cheats
> Yet drops no jot of faith!

And so on, straight through the splendid poem. The last verse quoted gives a hint of the broader meaning and power of romance. For when we trace imagination and romance deeper than our first impressions of them, we find them rooted in what else but man's faith and, deeper still, man's hope; that lasting and undying quality which he has carried with him since the first and will carry with him to the last.

THE STORY OF MAN'S HOPE

Man has taken the facts of life as Sheherazade took them, and from them by means of imagination and hope has made beauty and loveliness. Things dire in themselves he has turned to lovely uses.

The story of man's hope, through the ages, is more fascinating than any tale told by Sheherazade, is more splendid in its daring and more marvelous in its craft and invention. Man, placed in a world where all things threatened him; where fire burned and frost bit him; surrounded by seas that forbade him; blown on by winds that buffeted him, menaced by death that in dark places surprised and challenged him, or in the noonday overtook him; his home and altars thrown down again and again by vast forces that mocked his puny strength; domineered by powers beside which the jinns and genii of the "Arabian Nights" seem but feeble spirits; what would one suppose the outcome could be but ignominious defeat!

Yet, like an Arab tale, built by the ingenious fancy of Sheherazade, the end is not defeat, but victory. For always there was man's faculty for hope, an undying, imaginative, unconquerable thing. Always there was his power of imagining

the world not as it was all about him, but as it *might be;* as he wished it might be, and, little by little, through the ages hoped it might be. So, imagining better things, he worked with feeble fingers at the weaving of his vast future; and as his daily strength failed and he must himself go to his rest, called to another in the fading light, and bade him not neglect the task.

So, hoping better things, man returned always to his sorrows refreshed and strengthened for new endeavor. Little by little and by a thousand and one ingenuities and inventions, pictured first in the mind's eye, imaged first in some chamber of the brain, man fulfilled his daring hope and attained his masterful destiny; contended with mighty powers; built cities in the ruined plain; reared new temples that towered in the very path of the earthquake; and beyond these, established a dream-world of the spirit, not less, with its more enduring city of more precious worth, with gates of pearl and walls of jasper, a city vast and beautiful, of "twelve thousand furlongs" and the river of life sweeping through the midst of it; a place where should dwell all those "who have come up out of great tribulation"; where there were trees that bore "twelve manner of fruits"; where there should be no night, "no more death, neither sorrow nor crying." "Eye

hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things," etc. It rings familiar. You see how in line it all is; whether it be St. Paul, in the prime of his strength talking to the Corinthians, or St. John, old, telling of the divine revelation on Patmos, or Sheherazade, young and pitiful in her doom, picturing with a less solemn but not a less human longing, "such riches as the kings of the earth have not seen."

In the "Arabian Nights," not alone in the individual story of Sheherazade, but again and again in those fascinating and ingenious tales she tells, we see man meeting the needs of life, with all their difficulty and happening and perplexity, not by patience and endurance, as we see it in the "Odyssey"; not by law and ordered justice, as in the "Divine Comedy"; nor by service to others, as in "Faust," but rather by that faculty for ingenuity and invention which is at bottom little else than hope itself. Sheherazade's invention of the Arabian tales is really her desire for life, her hope turned to that form, her hope of escaping her doom. For hope is, indeed, always a kind of higher ingenuity, fitting the broken and scattered pieces of life into a colored and beautiful pattern.

Here in the "Arabian Nights" is a great work of art, but art woven, as all great art must be,

from the very materials and essentials of life; essentially true, however fantastic in its phrases and happenings, and therefore essentially moral, essentially spiritual.

If man's longing and need for patience, for justice, for self-sacrifice seem to be the central motives of the other great books we have studied, the central motive here would seem to be man's longing and need for hope. Yet we should be careful not to interpret that hope either narrowly or personally. In its larger interpretation and meaning hope is that desire of the soul for what lies beyond its natural experience.

> The desire of the moth for the star,
> Of the day for the morrow,
> The devotion to something afar
> From the sphere of our sorrow.

Nor should we forget that the faculty of imagination covers the past as well as the future; that it endows us with all the delights of memory as well as those of hope. By means of it we can rebuild in a moment's time, "glittering cities of the plain," can fashion in an instant, for the mind's enjoyment, a world gone by; may summon days departed and recall vanished delights; may people the hour with kings of old, or deck it in wonders yet to be. It reminds one, does it not, of Aladdin's power? And Aladdin's lamp, as we

read of it, has a strange familiarity in our hands; we have in some experience of our own felt the touch of it. We have been in this place before.

Man's love of the wonderful, his desire for the unattainable, that first; then, the wonderful and the seemingly unattainable attained quickly and with ease by the spirit; here in these two things lie the springs of all hope and the sources of all romance.

> To hope till hope creates
> From its own wreck the thing it contemplates.

You and I, individually, may fail of this glorious hope, and the old faculty of picturing what may be may grow dull in us; but the race will continue to hope and imagine. Always, we conceive, man will imagine daringly and hope superbly; and as long as he does the "Arabian Nights," or tales similarly true in daring and superb imagery, will be accounted among the world's greatest books.

CHAPTER IX

DON QUIXOTE

Don Diego asked his son what he thought of the stranger. "I think, sir," said Don Lorenzo, "that it is not in the power of all the physicians and scribes in the world to cure his distemper. He is a diversified madman, with many lucid intervals."

Don Quixote.

Shakespeare embodied generic types rather than individuals. In this Cervantes alone approached him; and Don Quixote and Sancho, like the men and women of Shakespeare, are the contemporaries of every generation, because they are not products of an artificial and transitory generation, because they are not products of an artificial and transitory society, but because they are animated by the primeval and unchanging forces of that humanity.

LOWELL.

WHILE "Don Quixote" falls readily under the head of one of the greatest books in the world, yet it differs in many ways so largely from most of the others as to seem to stand in a class almost by itself. Centered around the character of one man though it is, there is a breadth and universality in the tale unparalleled in any of the great books we have so far studied. The others are the stories of certain great characters in particular circumstance, or, as in the case of the "Arabian Nights," of many characters in particular and extraordinary circumstance; but "Don Quixote" is the story of one man's journey

through a world of entirely usual yet infinitely varied happening.

The story wanders and runs on as does a road, in and out of town and fields and forest, past inns and hospitable and inhospitable dwellings; up lonely steeps and into far valleys fertile in adventure; a kind of highway it is, given over to humanity. Following it one meets on that highway many who come and go, a world of people kind and unkind, foolish and partly wise, selfish and generous, nobles and criminals; but one meets one character, most notable of them all. He goes in full armor and is not a man after the manner or fashion of his day; he is some one different and unlike. He is mounted on a scrawny horse, and behind him on a dappled ass rides one Sancho Panza, who acts to him as squire. And this man, dressed out of season in anachronistic armor and bent on high and untimely adventure, is Don Quixote.

Cervantes was born in Spain at Alcala de Henares in 1547 and he died in 1616. "Don Quixote," which he wrote when he was about to be old, was published in 1605. To the writing of it, besides his keen intellect and nearly matchless observation, Cervantes brought an unusual fund of experience. Born in an age full of color and

adventure, his life was even for that age a highly colored and adventurous one; a student, a traveler, a soldier enlisted under Don Juan of Austria, he fought valiantly against the Turks, lost his left hand in one engagement, and thought it a trifling price to pay for the honor of partaking in so great an action. Later, captured by a Corsair captain, he was a slave in captivity for some five or more years, enduring many hardships. To free himself and his fellow-prisoners he continually risked his life. He was ransomed at last, however, by his relatives and friends. He returned to Spain at thirty-three, having spent "ten years of manhood amidst such varieties of travel, adventure, enterprise, and suffering as must have sufficed to sober very considerably the lively temperament, and at the same time to mature, enlarge, and strengthen the powerful understanding with which he had been gifted by nature."

He again followed the profession of arms, but abandoned that career at last and devoted himself to literature.

Writing at first for the stage, during his years of effort along these lines, he found but indifferent success; but the publication of the first part of his "Don Quixote" brought him almost immediate fame. It was read by all classes in all

places, by old and young. It is told by Barrano Porrena of Philip III, that "the king, standing one day in the palace of Madrid, observed a certain student with a book in his hand on the opposite banks of the Manzanares. He was reading, but every now and then he interrupted his reading, and gave himself violent blows upon the forehead, accompanied with innumerable motions of ecstasy and mirthfulness. 'That student,' said the king, 'is either out of his wits, or reading the history of Don Quixote.'"

Cervantes, while his "Don Quixote" was received so enthusiastically, met also with much envy and detraction at the hands of many contemporary authors; but none of this seems to have greatly harassed him or much altered his natural poise. In 1615 he published the second part of "Don Quixote." He died the following year, on April 18. Most of his biographers remember to point out to us that he left his world on the same day of the same year as did Shakespeare.

It has been sometimes supposed that Cervantes wrote his "Don Quixote" to satirize and help put out of fashion knight-errantry. One has only to place the book in its own century, however, to know this supposition to be wrong. Knight-errantry, in the form described

by Cervantes, had very long been out of date. The cavalier had long before taken the place of the knight. That the book was intended to satirize the absurd worship of a dead romance is not untenable; but the larger symbolism and meaning of it, as one studies it carefully, dispose amicably enough of all clashing theories.

Cervantes' purposes and attitude of mind are very nobly conceived by Lockhart in his valuable "Life of Cervantes." He notes that: "One of the greatest triumphs of his [Cervantes] skill is the success with which he continually prevents us from confounding the absurdities of the knight-errant with the generous aspirations of the cavalier. For to the last, even in the midst of madness, we respect Don Quixote himself. We pity the delusion, we laugh at the situation, but we revere, in spite of every ludicrous accompaniment, and of every insane exertion, the noble spirit of the Castilian gentleman; and we feel, in every page, that we are perusing the work, not of a heartless scoffer, a cold-blooded satirist, but of a calm and enlightened mind, in which true wisdom had grown up by the side of true experience, — of one whose genius moved in a sphere too lofty for mere derision, of one who knew human nature too well not to respect it, of one, finally, who, beneath a mask of apparent

levity, aspired to commune with the noblest principles of humanity; and, above all, to give form and expression to the noblest feelings of the national character of Spain. . . . Others have been content with the display of wit, satire, eloquence — and some of them have displayed all these with the most admirable skill and power; but he who rises from the perusal of 'Don Quixote' thinks of the wit, the satire, the eloquence of Cervantes but as the accessories and lesser ornaments of a picture of national life and manners by far the most perfect and glowing that was ever embodied in one piece of composition; a picture, the possession of which alone will be sufficient to preserve, in freshness and honour, the Spanish name and character."

THE STORY OF DON QUIXOTE

It is impossible in an article of this length to tell at all fully the story of "Don Quixote." It is a thing of so much detail and adventure that it does not lend itself to a brief recital; there are in it so many divisions, subdivisions, stories within stories, so many happenings, and these happenings intricate and allied, as they are in life itself. On the other hand, the framework or outline of the story is simple, too simple, indeed, to give one an adequate idea of the very varied

whole. Our only hope lies in a middle course, namely, to try to give the outline and some idea, if only very briefly, of the variety of adventure which goes to the making of this great book.

The story starts out like a tale told intimately by one who loved to tell it: —

At a certain village in La Mancha, of which I cannot remember the name, there lived not long ago one of those old-fashioned gentlemen who are never without a lance upon a rack, an old target, a lean horse, and a greyhound. His diet consisted more of beef than mutton; and with minced meat on most nights, lentils on Fridays, griefs and groans on Saturdays, and a pigeon extraordinary on Sundays, he consumed three-quarters of his revenue; the rest was laid out in a plush coat, velvet breeches, with slippers of the same, for holidays; and a suit of the very best homespun cloth, which he bestowed on himself for working days. His whole family was a housekeeper something turned of forty, a niece not twenty, and a man that served him in the house and in the field, and could saddle a horse, and handle the pruning-hook.

Besides the housekeeper and niece we note two friends mentioned early in the story, the curate of the parish, and one Nicholas, the barber and surgeon of the town, it being common in those days for the two professions to exist under one cap.

The passion of this gentleman, Quixada or Quixote, as he comes later to be called, the hero

of the tale, seems to have been for the reading of books of knight-errantry, wherein he would so lose himself as to forget whether the time was day or night, or whether it was duty or pleasure that called him. So because of sleeping little and reading much, he did, indeed, lose at last the clear use of his reason. "A world of disorderly notions" crowded into his poor brain and remained there, so that in time his head was full of nothing but enchantments, challenges, battles, wounds, complaints, torments, and "abundance of stuff and impossibilities." He believed all that he read in his books of knight-errantry to be actual and at hand; and thought himself called with a special calling to take up the profession of a wandering knight. It is well to note carefully what Cervantes tells us of Don Quixote's actual purpose; and to observe how in that purpose Don Quixote's own pleasure and honor were bound up with his service to others.

For now he thought it convenient and necessary, as well for the increase of his own honour, . . . as the service of the public, to turn knight-errant; that thus imitating those knights-errant of whom he had read, redressing all manner of grievances, and exposing himself to danger on all occasions, at last, after a happy conclusion of his enterprises, he might purchase everlasting honour and renown.

With all this in mind he fitted out, and patched

up as best he might an old suit of armor; selected for himself a horse, who, though lean and forlorn enough, was to the prejudiced eye of Don Quixote above all the horses in the world. This horse he dubbed Rosinante.

So being equipped he

thought it now a crime to deny himself any longer to the injured world, that wanted such a deliverer; the more when he considered what grievances he was to redress, what wrongs and injuries to remove, what abuses to correct, and what duties to discharge.

But it was to him unthinkable that there should be any knight without a lady-love; for without one, to whom indeed could he dedicate his valor and on whom bestow the trophies of his prowess? Now there lived one not far away in Toboso, a country lass, upon whom he resolved to bestow the distinction of his chivalrous devotion. Deeming it necessary she should have a name resembling, at the very least, the name of some princess or lady of high degree, such as one encounters in ancient tales of chivalry, he determined to call her Dulcinea del Toboso.

Having, then, without her knowledge or consent, so elected her the lady of his soul, and having secretly donned his armor, he mounted Rosinante, and one morning before day rode out in search of adventure. But, first of all, he

resolved he must find some one who would dub him knight and thus give sanction to his purpose.

Riding he came at last to an inn which he at once took to be some castle. Here after much astonishment, and some initial misunderstanding, the innkeeper, seeing him to be mad, yielded to his entreaties and went through some form of knighting him.

Don Quixote, desiring to show his prowess, was now not long in finding adventure and some one he might challenge. A good many people by Don Quixote's exploits having been set by the ears, the innkeeper was finally glad enough to be rid of the disturbing stranger, and the whole expedition ended ingloriously but not unkindly by a good-hearted peasant bringing home the worn and wounded and over-valorous Don Quixote.

Meantime Don Quixote's housekeeper and niece worried much over his absence and consulted with Perez the curate and Nicholas the barber. The housekeeper, guessing aright what had happened, laid the whole mischance to Don Quixote's reading of the detested books of knight-errantry. "May Satan and Barabbas e'en take all such books that have thus cracked the best headpiece in all La Mancha!"

Even while they were discussing the matter Don Quixote, in the care of the countryman, sore and much battered, returned. The housekeeper and his niece got him to bed and at his urgent request left him to his rest. Meanwhile the curate and the barber consulted and resolved on a course of action which they thought wise, and which was this: They would burn those volumes in Don Quixote's library which had been so largely to blame for his mental downfall, also they would board up and stop up the door to his study and tell him when he desired to go to it that the study and all it contained had been carried away by some powerful enchanter, "for they hoped the effect would cease when they had taken away the cause."

But as might more reasonably have been expected this, of course, but added fuel to the fire of Don Quixote's madness. He was resolved now only the more that his services as a knight were needed to break down the power of all such wicked enchanters and to redress this and other grievous wrongs.

Meanwhile he persuaded one of his neighbors, Sancho Panza, an honest and poor country fellow, to go with him, as his squire, seeking adventure, offering him many inducements and promises and not forgetting to tell him

it was likely such an adventure would present itself, as might secure him the conquest of some island in the time that he might be picking up a straw or two, and then the squire might promise himself to be made governor of the place.

Having agreed, then, on when to begin their journey, Don Quixote on Rosinante and Sancho on Dapple, his gray ass, rode away from the village one night, secretly, Don Quixote without so much as a thought for his niece and housekeeper and friends, and Sancho Panza without bidding good-bye to his wife and children, and with his head full of the promise of the island, of which as they jogged on Sancho did not fail to remind Don Quixote.

"I beseech your worship, Sir Knight-errant," quoth Sancho to his master, "be sure you don't forget what you promised me about the island; for I dare say I shall make shift to govern it, let it be never so big."

From here on the story is one of innumerable adventures, in all of which Don Quixote maintains his valorous and mad resolve to redress wrongs, and, by the might and glory of his purpose and his prowess, to set the world right, in his own manner.

As in the "Arabian Nights," the main story — that of Don Quixote himself, like that of Sheherazade — runs like a slender thread through

the whole book, while strung on it, hiding and yet attesting it, are all those pearls of adventure, some more nearly perfect than others, but all held together by the thread of the main story.

It would be as impossible to touch on them all singly here as in the essay on the "Arabian Nights" it was impossible to deal separately with those many and beautiful Eastern tales. As in that great work, here, too, some of the adventures are rare gems, while others do not lack flaws to make them of less worth. Those best known to many are perhaps the famous attack on the windmills, the exquisite story of Marcella and the shepherds, the adventure of the Biscayan lady, the more famous happenings at the inn where Sancho was tossed in a blanket, those adventures of Don Quixote relating to Mambrino's helmet, the freeing of the criminals who are on their way to the galleys, the battle with the wineskins, etc.

Meantime, while all these adventures are being had, we find that the two friends of Don Quixote, the barber and curate, have been much disturbed at his second absence and, having followed him in disguise, seek by a trickery of kind intent to decoy Don Quixote back to his home, that they may there care for him and cure him of his madness.

But kind as are these two men, the means they employ are not wise means, so that in the end they do but lead to Don Quixote's longer absence and more extended adventure. It is here that we come on the story of Cardenio and Lucinda and Dorothea. This leads on to still others. The whole scheme broadens out and is admirably devised by the author to introduce new happening and other characters. There is now brought together an entire party of human beings whose interests are intricately mingled and intermingled. Each one has a human trouble and purpose of his own. Each tells some story which adds still other adventures and interests to the tale. Under the author's hands a world of fiction and reality like our own now takes on form; and before our eyes assembles, in likely circumstance and a little time, a friendly, interesting, companionable company of men and women, all intensely personal and real, all humanly egotistical, self-centered, yet meaning to be kind; while among them, never lessened, never lost sight of, moves the figure of Don Quixote himself, supreme egotist of them all, yet among them all, mad though he is, the one person devoted wholly, singly to the service of others. You have seen how other paths and roads curve and intersect and cross and recross

and lead into a main highway; but wider, more traveled, always distinguishable, of broader purpose and of more import, the highway goes on unhindered; it is like that.

It is not until a good while later that the barber and curate, clumsily enough, as such things are generally accomplished in real life, manage to deal with the mad hero and to get him home. Don Quixote, not until after many battering adventures, returns at last to his village, not even, now, mounted on Rosinante but lying ingloriously sick and weak on a hay-cart drawn by oxen. A boy runs ahead and tells the housekeeper and niece. These wail piteously at the plight of Don Quixote. Sancho's wife Teresa runs to meet Sancho and listens with rapt delight to the tales he tells of the island he is one day to govern, but which has not yet fallen into his or his master's fortunes.

The first volume ends here with the return of the knight and squire and the promise of the author to tell more of Don Quixote's further and later adventures.

In the second volume, Don Quixote starts out once again and Sancho with him. New adventures follow, too many to mention here.

When the long story at last closes it is in the following manner: —

By means of a device of the barber and curate, once more Don Quixote is persuaded to return to his home village. There these two, who this time have gone ahead of him, receive him with open arms. There, too, the housekeeper and niece rejoice once more to see him, weep over him, and get him to bed and tend him with loving care.

But "whether from melancholy," or "by the disposition of heaven that so ordered it," a fever now overtakes him. His niece and housekeeper stay by him and Sancho never stirs from his master's bedside.

Suddenly one day — it is as though the fever had cleared his mind — Don Quixote wakes to a sense of God's mercy and tells his niece to send for the curate and the barber. Then she questions him as to these mercies of God to which he alludes: —

" The mercies, niece," answered Don Quixote, "are those that Heaven has this moment vouchsafed to me, which, as I said, my sins do not prevent. My judgment is now free and clear, and the murky clouds of ignorance removed, which my painful and continual reading of those detestable books of knight-errantry cast over me. Now I perceive their nonsense and deceit, and am only sorry the discovery happens so late, when I want time to make some amends by reading others that should enlighten my soul. I find, niece, that I am at the point of death; and I

would meet it in such a manner as to show that my life has not been so evil as to leave me the character of a madman."

Don Quixote then begs for a confessor to shrive him and a scrivener to make his will. He is, indeed, now returned to his senses, though his niece and housekeeper and friends can hardly credit it.

He who started out mad on his mad adventures, dies in his bed, sane at the last. The mental illness which had long clouded "the best headpiece in La Mancha" has cleared away now. One finds at the end of the volume a serene light like that which sometimes comes in the west at the end of a day which has been uncertain and clouded. The old follies and enchantments are melted away like so many clouds; the old delusions of grandeur, the high and foolish ambitions that possessed him, he renounces now, sanely, as follies and untruths. Humbly and as a Christian, with that gentleness and courtesy which even his madness at the worst had never unseated from his soul, he accepts the world for what it is. Renouncing all castles and imagined estates and high kinships to which his madness had laid claim, he now disposes wisely and generously of his meager possessions to those who shall survive him, and commends his soul humbly and

honorably to God, and with clean hands and the heart of a child goes to his Maker.

There are in all literature few death-scenes so touching as that in which the soul of the high-minded Don Quixote goes by, while those other simple souls — so little understanding all the pity and high meaning of his former madness — stand about sadly. The niece and housekeeper are there with swollen eyes; the barber and the curate, mourning and sorrowful; and Sancho, having to no avail begged and advised his beloved master of the sheer madness of dying "without ado, without being killed by anybody," and more such affectionate and foolish talk, bursts into tears. In all these kindnesses and gentlenesses one sees but the reflected light of those shining and lovable qualities which show clear in Don Quixote himself only the more clearly as his day draws to its close.

For, indeed, as on some occasion has been observed; whilst Don Quixote was plain Alonso Quixada, the Good, and whilst he was Don Quixote de la Mancha, he was ever of pleasant humour and agreeable behaviour, and therefore he was not only beloved by his family, but by every one that knew him.

The character of Don Quixote is drawn with an amazing cleverness and consistency. Here is a master hand at work. Each chapter is con-

trived not only to add color and adventure to the story, but to lend a kind of insistence to the great character that is being drawn; here one stroke, delicate and seemingly unimportant, there another, but the picture grows, and there before us to the life, living, is Don Quixote.

Now look at the picture and examine the character: Here is a man essentially noble and devoted, sensitive to beauty and goodness as few are; an almost perfect instrument, one would say, for the service of mankind, — a nature gentle and serviceable, yet with one fatal flaw; something somewhere — some unadaptability, some supersensitiveness, some egotism, call it what you will — which unfits him; something which prevents him from seeing life and its needs as they really are. This fact or that, he would change and alter to suit his fancy; he prefers to believe things to be what he *wants* them to be.

And you will note this is not imagination, — as in the case of Sheherazade, — though it has a certain resemblance to it. In imagining, the mind is wholly conscious that it does but imagine; it remains complete master of itself; it can at one and the same time admit truth and enjoy fancy. For imagination is a quality wholly controlled by the reason. Howsoever far fancy may fly, it comes back to reality as a bird which

knows its own limitations returns to the home bough and nest; imagination returns invariably to life as it is. But the fancy and self-deception and delusion of Don Quixote are rather the result of some fatal miscalculation, some essential lack of truth in the beginning, some lack of *love of truth.* You will notice how Don Quixote has all the other lovable or desirable qualities that go to the making of an ideal and serviceable nature, but he has not innately the desire to see things truthfully as they are. He has fire and vigor and endurance; he has the longing to right wrong, to succor the helpless and defend the oppressed; he holds his life light and as of little worth save to serve, in the name of valor and gentleness and honor; but he has not that crowning virtue, that necessary basis of all reasonableness, that inner beauty of the soul, that white, passionate love of truth, which would have saved him.

Ingeniously his author has laid Don Quixote's madness to the reading of exaggerated books of chivalry. These were themselves lacking in truth. It must have happened, you see, that their high-sounding adventures lay along the line of Don Quixote's own desires for serving the world; and blinded by those desires, indifferent to the truth, he stumbles into the folly and false-

ness of believing these books to be what they are not, because they are so nearly what he would like them to be.

As to these books we are shown, in clever contrast to Don Quixote's madness and lack of truth, the simple, truthful nature of Don Quixote's niece. She is not blinded by her own desires, and she looks the truth in the face with clear young eyes: —

"Oh, sir," said the niece, "have a care what you say; all the stories of knights-errant are but lies and fables."

At this Don Quixote is beside himself. This clear-seeing girl has touched on a tender spot, has laid hand on something dear to him, has drawn away a veil and tried to show him that this thing which he wishes to believe is untruthful. This he cannot endure; anything else, but not this. He is determined to believe that these tales and fables, which fit so well with his fancy, are true. These books say, for instance, that a famous knight did with one blow of his sword sever the heads of seven giants; and since it were desirable to have such power, — so be it. In other words, let us accept that for truth which we find desirable, believe what we find it pleasant to believe, let facts be what they may. So Don Quixote not only believes the knights of old to have pos-

sessed superhuman powers, but somewhat old and feeble though he is himself, he will, *because he desires to do so* — believe himself to be possessed of such powers not less. To his niece we find him replying: —

"Now by the powerful Sustainer of my being! . . . Is it possible that a young baggage who scarce knows her bobbins from a bodkin should presume to set to with her tongue, and censure the histories of knights-errant."

There is more of this; then the girl, still insisting on the unconscious clear truth, urges, a little pleadingly this time, appealing to his reason: —

"Bless me, dear Uncle, that you should know so much as to be able, if there was occasion, to get up into a pulpit, or preach in the streets, and yet be so strangely mistaken, so grossly blind of understanding, as to fancy a man of your years and infirmity can be strong and valiant; that you can set everything right, and force stubborn malice to bend, when you yourself stoop beneath the burden of age; and what is yet more odd, that you are a knight, when it is well known you are none!"

We should hate him — this Don Quixote with his insistence on his own opinion, with his determination to have his own way — "Come Heaven, come Hell" (and very generally, Hell it is for himself and all who love him) but Cervantes was himself great enough of heart to see the pity that lies at the heart of all egotism, not only the

human folly, but the human pity of it, and so he drew his Don Quixote so that we could see the pity of it too. Cervantes wished to draw a great and yet lovable egotist, and to make a supreme egotist whom one still can love was obliged to make him mad. So here is nothing to rouse one's ire, nothing to condemn; gentle and pitiable he has made his knight, and we grow gentle and pitiful reading of him. Here laughter is close to tears. For Don Quixote's determination to see the world *as it is not*, and only as he wishes it to be results in adventures that are near to clear humor. For humor is at bottom just that — the surprise of the unlikely; and here, owing to Don Quixote's determination to see everything as it is not, there is perpetually the surprise of the unlikely. You see how well everything falls into place and how consistently and on what large lines the book is planned.

When Sancho and Don Quixote start off, the humor of the thing runs with them every step of the way, like a faithful page at their stirrups. They picture what wealth shall be theirs by means of their adventures. Sancho sees himself risen to such distinction that he shall have even a special barber for himself. Might he not have one? — not unlikely? Don Quixote answers him confidently: "Do but leave the matter of the

barber to me." — "Do but take care you be a king," begs Sancho, "and I an earl." — "Never doubt it," replied Don Quixote.

The evasion of truth, the direct denial of truth, the implied denial of truth, — all these are played on here, there, everywhere throughout the tale. Over and over Don Quixote insists the world shall be not as it is, but as he wishes it to be. When his own follies have resulted in disaster, he turns his head away from that truth also and will never admit himself to have been at fault. The truth stares him in the face, but he turns away from it, refusing to recognize it, and declares instead that evil enchanters who have some personal grudge against him (you note here the subtle egotism and also the author's keen knowledge of madness with its recurring delusions of persecution) have wrought this calamity. Inns are not inns, but castles; ill-favored wenches are peerless beauties, barbers' basins are golden helmets, etc. He does not even wait for any one to tell him the facts — he has them already altered to suit his fancy.

As an example: Sancho Panza has gone on a pretended expedition to interview in the name of Don Quixote the country lass whom Don Quixote has elected lady of his soul. Don Quixote asks eagerly for Sancho's news, as Sancho

returns, yet will not even wait the telling of it.

"You arrived, and how was that queen of beauty then employed? On my conscience, thou found'st her stringing of orient pearls, or embroidering some curious device in gold for me her captive knight; was it not so, my Sancho?" — "No, faith," answered the squire, "I found her winnowing a parcel of wheat very seriously in the back yard." — "Then," said the Don, "you may rest assured, that every corn of that wheat was a grain of pearl, since she did it the honour of touching it with her divine hand. Didst thou observe the quality of the wheat, was it not of the finest sort?" — "Very indifferent, I thought," said the squire. — "Well, this, at least, you must allow; it must make the finest, whitest bread if sifted by her white hands. But go on; when you delivered my letter, did she kiss it? Did she treasure it in her bosom, or what ceremony did she use worthy such a letter? How did she behave herself?" — "Why, truly, sir," answered Sancho, "when I offered her the letter, she was very busy handling her sieve; 'And prythee, honest friend,' said she, 'do so much as lay that letter down upon that sack there; I cannot read it till I have winnowed out what is in my hands.'" — "O unparalleled discretion!" cried Don Quixote; "she knew that a perusal required leisure, and therefore deferred it, for her more pleasing and private hours."

So again and again, as Sancho holds out the simple truth to him, Don Quixote puts it aside and substitutes *that which he wishes might be the truth.* You see the fine drawing of it and how well, in page after page, far more than is here

quoted, the same thing is sustained; we see the thing now in this light, now in that; or we hear the theme now in this key, now in another; now given out by flutes and oboes as it were, now taken up by the strings, now blared forth by the brasses.

In the adventure of the criminals on their way to the galleys, we have the same theme. Don Quixote sees a line of miscreants who, for serious offenses, crimes against society, are being led in chains to just punishment. Straightway his desire does away with all this truth. He will not have it that these men are criminals; they are rather innocent men oppressed whom he must succor and release from the officer of the law who leads them. For Don Quixote will not see this man to be an officer of the law, but only an oppressor of innocence.

"Thou art a cat and a rat and a coward to boot," Don Quixote says to him. Then he manages by violence to free the convicts of their chains, never admitting that he is letting loose on society dangers and evils. When Sancho ventures to point this out to him and remonstrate with him, we have this, said in Don Quixote's best manner: —

"You duffle-headed clown, is it for a knight-errant, when he meets with people laden with chains, and under oppres-

sion, to examine whether they are in those circumstances for their crimes or only through misfortune? We are only to relieve the afflicted, to look on their distress, and not on their crimes. I met a company of poor wretches, who went along sorrowful, dejected, linked together like the beads of a rosary; whereupon I did what my conscience and my profession obliged me to. And what has any man to say to this? If any one dares say otherwise . . . I say he knows little of knight-errantry, and lies like a baseborn villain and this I will make him know more effectually, with the convincing edge of my sword!" This said with a grim look he fixed himself in his stirrups and pulled his helm over his brows.

In the inimitable adventure of Mambrino's helmet, we have the same thing in still another and lighter key. Don Quixote sees coming toward him a traveling barber riding an ass, and who wears on his head to protect his hat from rain his brass barber's basin. Immediately Don Quixote's fancy sees in the traveler a knight wearing a helmet of gold, which is the famous Malbrino's helmet, of which he has read in some of his musty books of knight-errantry. Again Sancho urges him that this is not so, but what we have in reply is the following: —

"How can I be mistaken, thou eternal misbeliever!" cried Don Quixote; "dost thou not see that knight that comes riding up directly towards us upon a dapple-grey steed, with a helmet of gold on his head?" — "I see what I see," replied Sancho, "and the devil of anything I can

spy but a fellow on such another grey ass as mine is, with something that glitters o' top of his head." — "I tell thee, that is Mambrino's helmet," replied Don Quixote; "do thou stand at a distance, and leave me to deal with him; thou shalt see, that without trifling away so much as a moment in needless talk, I will finish this adventure, and possess myself of the desired helmet."

The barber, seeing himself descended on by what appears to be an apparition, throws himself off his ass and scuttles away for dear life, leaving the basin behind. Don Quixote seizes it, triumphant, and though he has it in his very hand and under the feel of his very fingers, he still declares it to be a helmet and claps it on his head as such. Sancho between fear and mirth very nearly but not quite laughs outright.

"What does the fool grin at now?" cried Don Quixote.

"I laugh," said he, "to think what a hugeous jolt-head he must needs have who was the owner of this same helmet that looks for all the world like a barber's basin."

And just here we come to a notable point in the tale, to a fine turn in the highway, and get sight of a broad country ahead. For you notice that before this Sancho has disputed and combated his master's delusions and false assertions, but here the thing becomes too much for him; his master's madness here becomes too strong for his handling; it breaks down even his stout and

stolid and practical manner. Don Quixote is self-deceived, — on himself be the penalty. But the world, as it happens, is so ordered that no man can fail, whether it be in truth or any other nobility, without affecting others than himself. So Don Quixote's self-deception begins to alter Sancho, and, as time goes on, affects others. His own mental integrity ruined, that of others is undermined somewhat. They can no longer deal with him on the basis of truth. They let him have his hobbies and let them go at that. In this way, he at last becomes separated from his fellows, alienated from his kind. It would seem as though Cervantes, long before modern science took up the term, conceived of madness as an alienation, and those who are mad as aliens. As the story goes on, as Don Quixote more and more indulges his delusions and further departs from strict intellectual and moral integrity and truth, more and more he is alienated from his kind, more and more he is a lonely figure, less and less can any one help him. There is no longer any exchange of opinions between himself and others, only his own exaggerated opinions asserted dogmatically. He resents every dispute, every assertion which differs from his own, so that by and by his companions withdraw their converse. His intellectual integrity gone, un-

truthful himself to a very point of madness, those about him withdraw truth from him. They can no longer deal with him on any reasonable terms; he makes wild assertions and his friends and companions leave them at last undisputed. This, you see, is the natural development and progress of all egotism.

Besides the instances just quoted, we find, at a point where Don Quixote proposes some new and mad plan, this: his companions are "all struck with amazement at this new folly. . . but they came into his new design, and approved of his folly as if it were wise."

Sancho, who has held out longest, in trying to cure his master of untruth, even Sancho finally gets to downright deception in dealing with him, that being, for a mind like Sancho's, the shortest cut, across the wide fields of their controversy, to peace.

The curate and the barber and the bachelor, Don Quixote's friends, do the same, though for a better purpose. Those with whom Don Quixote meets in his adventures are all more or less set by the ears by this knight, who, however gentle and courtly by nature, is nevertheless like a kind of untruth incarnate. The whole reasonable order of living and of other people's lives is destroyed by the failure of one man to admit reasonably

that things are as they are. In one of the best scenes at the inn, one of the most kindly and most humorous, the whole place is set in turmoil to sustain Don Quixote's mad assertions. At last all the parties who have been contending against him for the truth's sake, finally relinquish the truth for peace' sake: —

> But at last the matter was made up; the packsaddle was agreed to be horse furniture, the basin a helmet, and the inn a castle, till the day of judgment, if Don Quixote would have it so.

THE CHARACTER OF SANCHO

In splendid contrast to the character of Don Quixote, yet complementing it faithfully, and as matchless, is that of Sancho Panza. Practical, downright, given to calling a spade a spade, a man poor in wits as he is in purse, as frank to admit that the object of his expeditions is pelf as his master is zealous in asserting his object to be the succor of the distressed, he goes through the story from end to end, dull, faithful, amusing, trite; full of proverbs, perpetually calling attention to obvious facts, a kind of animated proverb, and concrete and very simple truth himself. His language is like himself, dull, funny, practical, obvious, absurdly sensible, as when (it is only one of many instances) he declares, with

cheer and downright sincerity, when he is about to start away on an errand: "For the sooner I go the sooner shall I come back; and the way to be gone is not to stay here." He pretends nothing, not he. He goes through sorry adventures with a wry face and through pleasant ones with a happy countenance. Good humor, sincerity, and a craving nature, these are his; but his craving is no immaterial and high-flown thing, like that of his master; what he most craves, barring always the craving of that fever to be governor of an island with which Don Quixote has inoculated him early in the story, is a comfortable place to sleep and good things to eat. There is, perhaps, no place in the book quite so happy, so contented, in any event, as the description of Sancho at the wedding of Comacho, ladling out pullets and geese for himself with a saucepan and falling to on the feast.

Sancho's wife Teresa is as simple as he, a downright piece of that stupid yet refreshing good sense and honesty not uncommon in many of her class; cleverly matched with Sancho, yet with a little touch of the cleverness and tact of the feminine added.

In the second part of the "Adventures of Don Quixote" — where the coarse horseplay and jests at the home of the Duke and

Duchess pall on one,—the letters of Sancho and Teresa redeem the whole; those of Teresa to the Duchess are about as good as anything in the whole book.

But though Teresa maintains her good sense almost — not quite — unaffected by the mad adventures of Don Quixote, yet Sancho, more nearly associated with him, does not. Under the mad promises of his master, Sancho himself develops at last a madness of his own, and characteristically enough it turns on his own gain and loss. When he finds that the curate and the barber are going to take Don Quixote home to try and cure him, only the loss of the island that has been promised him looms large in Sancho's mind, blotting out all other consideration. His clumsy folly and frank greed show themselves suddenly in anger and a madness of his own; and for a moment he seems as demented as his master. What! would they take his master away from his adventures! Would they rob Sancho of his island, of which he may any minute gain possession! So he berates them for knaves.

One could go on and on calling attention to the consistency, the humor, the wit, the charm of this great book, — for like other great books it is practically inexhaustible; but there is space

here only to sum up for better study the character of its hero.

The character of Don Quixote is as human and universal, as broad, as far-reaching, one might say, as the adventure and canvas of the story. One cannot read of the mad, adventurous knight without in time coming to love him with a kind of tender devotedness. We are reminded of Charles Lamb saying (I know not where to find it, and quote only inexactly) that he would rather listen to the irrational talk of her he loved most (his beloved and afflicted sister) than to listen to the wisdom of many sages.

But there are other feelings than those of tenderness and devotion that this character draws out. As we know him better, we know him to be more than Don Quixote of La Mancha. It is not the blood of the Quixadas that gives him his distinction. He, like Ulysses, Faust, Christian, and the rest, is a child of the race itself, and a brother to all of us. The adventures of thousands of men and women since the world began are bound up in his irrational hopes, — his mad egotism, his unlikely follies. He is the embodied spirit of all men who have so long believed their own opinions that they are no longer open to the reason of others; he recalls to us, though with less solemn tragedy, Lear,

and many more; he is the spirit, too, of all young men as well, who push the realities of life aside, and instead of truth, will have only their own visions of life as they prefer to believe it to be. Here, too, met in this one great character, with their blood flowing in his veins as it were, are all those lost in their own beliefs, who have clung to their follies against fact and reason. Here, too, are all those harmed by the sophistry and unsound reasoning of others, men and women made mad by the countless systems and religions and teachings of those who substitute theories and mysteries and romance for the clear truths of life. We have passed by him often, touched hands with him a hundred times, this Don Quixote, and his eyes have looked out at us from under many other disguises than that of the rusty armor in which Cervantes clothes him. The character is not so particular as it is universal. Some strange and striking familiarity is in it for each of us; for, indeed, this madness of Don Quixote, so strong in him, is a madness with which we are all, without doubt, severally affected in differing degrees. Don Quixote's irrational determination to believe as he wants to believe rather than as the facts warrant is something with which most of us are more or less possessed.

Lockhart observes that: "Don Quixote is not merely to be regarded as a Spanish Cavalier, filled with a Spanish madness, and exhibiting that madness in the eyes of Spaniards of every condition and rank of life, from the peasant to the grandee; — he is also the type of a more universal madness; — he is the symbol of Imagination, continually struggling and contrasted with Reality; — he represents the eternal warfare between Enthusiasm and Necessity — the eternal discrepancy between the aspirations and the occupation of man — the omnipotence and the vanity of human dreams."

But the matter goes deeper even than this. Not only is "Don Quixote" faithful in its delineation of human nature, but it holds up again and again one of the desirable and great ideals of life for all of us to see. It insists again and again in its own manner, on one of the great fundamental desires and needs of the human heart. Here, as in "Faust," the great lesson is taught and the great message delivered by negative means. "Faust," selfish almost up to the last, teaches as do few other characters the great lesson of self-sacrifice. Don Quixote, mad through a hundred and twenty-five chapters and regaining his reason only on his deathbed, teaches and sets forth the value and desirability of truth as

no other character has ever done, and inspires us, as no other, to a better seeking of it. Reading of this madman, our own reason consciously or unconsciously becomes the clearer. These follies of his laughed at, in most cases, so kindly by the author, shame us to relinquish a few follies of our own; the ruin of his life, the loss of his mental integrity through the indulgence of his unwarranted fancy, strike in us some fear lest we may have sacrificed our own integrity, our own knowledge of truth for something that at the time has seemed more desirable than the truth. Has our own reason been stultified by systems of elaborate beliefs foisted on us by others, or have we thought for ourselves? Have we flattered facts, and assumed what was not? Have we pretended or given royalty and titles to things that had none; cheated ourselves and others? Have we exaggerated trifles, tilted at windmills, laid stress on the unimportant, and overlooked the one thing of great and fundamental value? Or have we seen *true*, or, at least, desired to see true, as dear, pitiful Don Quixote until almost the very last did not?

So even in the madness of this courteous Don Quixote there is a kind of hidden courtesy, — a sort of secret charity and high purpose in his left hand of which his right hand, for all its generous

giving, knows nothing. For the tale, even while amusing us, has succeeded in making beautiful that "sweet reasonableness" in which Don Quixote himself is so lacking. The very tragedy itself is thus softened, and that madness, which would make of the Knight of La Mancha one of the really tragic figures of literature, contrives only to make him instead one of the most lovable. Dignity, pity, kindness, madness, high purpose and unreasonableness and failure; out of all of which, by some genius of the author, is wrought a victory of the mind and a truth for the spirit. It is as though Cervantes had set himself to embody, in one memorable and striking figure, humanity itself as he saw it; humanity old, untruthful, deluded, wandering among a thousand cheats, clinging to outworn customs and beliefs, pretending to nobilities not its own, lending itself here, there, everywhere among a thousand falsehoods; humanity with its ineffectual virtues, its imperfect vision; man with his wasted energies, his pitiful follies, his self-delusion, "infinitely childish, often admirably valiant, often touchingly kind; sitting down, amidst his momentary life, to debate of right and wrong and the attributes of the deity; rising up to do battle for an egg or die for an idea." Don Quixote is, indeed, a "diversified madman"

whom "neither all the physicians nor the scribes of the world can cure of his distemper"; yet teaching and instilling, even by his very madness, a deeper reverence and longing for truth, and holding fast, in some chamber of his brain, the love of it himself and coming to it humbly and gratefully at the last.

CHAPTER X

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

Ingenious dreamer, in whose well-told tale
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail;
Whose hum'rous vein, strong sense, and simple style
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile;
Witty, and well employed, and like thy Lord,
Speaking in parables his slighted word.

COWPER.

John Bunyan, we hope, is no wise our best theologian; neither, unhappily, is theology our most attractive science; yet which of our compends and treatises, nay, which of our romances and poems, lives in such mild sunshine as the good old "Pilgrim's Progress" in the memory of so many men?

CARLYLE.

Even those who regard Christianity itself as but a natural outgrowth of the conscience and intellect, and yet desire to live nobly and make the best of themselves, can recognize familiar footprints in every step of Christian's journey. . . . We, too, every one of us, are pilgrims on the same road.

FROUDE.

IT is, roughly, about two hundred and fifty years since the "Pilgrim's Progress" was written. In that time it has been translated into some seventy or eighty tongues and has become known all around the world; in its wide circuit second only to the Bible itself. Here is a remarkable history of a remarkable book — no other was ever, indeed, quite like it.

When, questioning the reasons for its greatness, we look into the life of John Bunyan, its author, we find him to have been a man of the people, with not more learning than could be got from scant schooling and the reading of a few books. His father a brazier, a worker in the coarser metals, Bunyan himself followed the same trade, working, as a young man, as a tinker, at the mending of pots and kettles, and working later in the Baptist church of his parish, by the word of God, at the mending of men's souls.

TIMES IN WHICH BUNYAN LIVED

Bunyan's life was lived in England (he was born there in 1628 and died there in 1688) during the times of Charles I, Cromwell, and Charles II. It was an age of fierce struggles, religious and otherwise — Royalist and Roundhead, Church of England and Puritan, set determinedly each against the other. Cromwell's devoted fighting men — "Ironsides" — were picked not so much for their knowledge of war as for their religious fervor. Cromwell's great warlike enterprises were all undertaken with prayer. He and his officers would assemble and pray with tears for light and divine guidance before any important action was decided on. There did not lack fervid and devout souls who, rebelling against falsity

of all kinds, claimed for themselves the free liberty of choice to be fervid and devout in their own fashion. Before Bunyan was born, our own Pilgrims had left a country where religious persecution was general and religious freedom was difficult to obtain. Bunyan never left his country. While not bitterly intolerant of the Crown, — some say even loyal to it, — he clung to religious freedom and remained at home to carry out there, consistently, courageously, his deep convictions.

If the Puritanism of those days seems to us hardly less superstitious than must have seemed the teachings of the Established Church of that day to the Puritans, yet there is this notable difference: Puritanism was a more downright thing; it stood strongly for freedom and sincerity, and very especially it stood for freedom and sincerity in religion.

In Bunyan's day a belief in a material hell that burned and in an everlasting punishment was as real and commonplace as scientific investigation is in ours. "Hell, not in metaphor, but in hard and palpable fact, awaited the sinner." The Puritans, wishing to purify the Established Church, which had fallen into insincerities and corruption, established a worship based almost wholly on sincerity; and one part of their sin-

cerity showed itself in their very literal interpretation of the Bible. They were tired of the mysteries, the symbols and forms, to them without meaning, with which they found the Established Church overgrown. We can judge much of their purpose from the names by which history and their own times designate them: *Puritans; Dissenters; Nonconformists.*

During Cromwell's Protectorate, the Puritans were permitted more or less to follow their own beliefs. But during the reign of Charles I, as well as that of Charles II, matters went so far that the Nonconformists and Puritans were forbidden to hold their religious meetings. Not this alone, though this was enough to have stirred deeply the old sincerities of those sincere men and women, but they were commanded by the Crown to attend worship in the Established Church they had learned to hate and mistrust. And worse still: "Nonconformists refusing to attend worship in the parish churches were to be imprisoned till they made their submission. Three months were allowed them to consider. If at the end of that time they were still obstinate, they were to be banished the realm; and if they subsequently returned to England without permission from the Crown, they were liable to execution as felons. This Act had fallen with the Long Par-

liament, but at the Restoration it was held to have revived and to be still in force. The parish churches were cleared of their unordained ministers. The Dissenters' chapels were closed. . . . Their separate meetings were prohibited, and they were not only forbidden to worship in their own fashion, but they had to attend church, under penalties. The Bedford Baptists refused to obey. Their meeting-house in the town was shut up, but they continued to assemble in woods and outhouses, Bunyan preaching to them as before and going to the place in disguise."

Bunyan was, of course, soon spied upon and brought to judgment. He refused stubbornly to give up his religious liberty; refused to go to church, even though he knew he must suffer the penalty of the law. He was arrested. It was told him that he could be free on bail until his trial if he would promise not to preach during the meantime; but he would make no such promise. The magistrates then, it is believed, did what they could to enable him to evade the law, but Bunyan was no man of evasions and would accept no compromise with his own soul. He kept his resolve. The law, on the other hand, had to be administered, and Bunyan was confined to Bedford jail. His confinement there lasted in all for a period of twelve years.

Looking into the circumstances of his arrest and trial, in which, it must be admitted, the law was as lenient as it consistently could be, and regarded in the light of our own day, Bunyan's obstinate devotion to this cause of a free religion might here or there seem to take on a semblance of fanaticism; but remembering the beliefs and happenings of his own day it stands out clearly as the courageous determination of a man who dared face many a haunting torment of heart and mind for the sake of what he believed to be right. However different his beliefs from our own, we can but be touched by his sincerity, his courage, and his suffering.

For this struggle caused him mental suffering of an extreme degree. No one who has found it difficult to do that which the spirit knows is right, as against that which the heart tells us is pleasant, can read the following account of himself which Bunyan wrote in prison without keen sympathy and understanding, or, at the very least, without being convinced of Bunyan's entire integrity of heart and mind.

Yet I was a man compassed with infirmities. The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me in this place [the prison in which he was writing] as the pulling of my flesh from my bones; and that not only because I am too, too fond of those great mercies, but also

because I should have often brought to my mind the hardships, miseries, and wants my poor family was like to meet with, should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all I had besides. [It lends meaning to his words when we remember that his beloved blind child did indeed die while he was in prison.] Poor child, thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow on thee. But yet, thought I, I must venture all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you. I was as a man who was pulling down his house upon the head of his wife and children. Yet, thought I, I must do it — I must do it.

Added to all those tugs at his heart was the fear of death and that fear, too, of eternal torment not uncommon to the sincerest minds of his day.

Also, I had dread of the torments of hell, which I was sure they must partake of that for fear of the cross do shrink from their profession. I had this much upon my spirit, that my imprisonment might end in the gallows for aught I could tell. In the condition I now was in I was not fit to die, . . . I feared I might show a weak heart, and give occasion to the enemy. This lay with great trouble on me, for methought I was ashamed to die with a pale face and tottering knees for such a cause as this. The things of God were kept out of my sight. The tempter followed me with, "But whither must you go when you die? What will become of you? What evidence have you for heaven and glory, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified?" Thus was I tossed many weeks.

Doubts, you see, of a heavenly reward assailed him. For a moment we are perhaps out of sympathy with him that he should have so great concern for the reward of his virtue. Then we see him beat down this, too, with those strong spiritual hands of his. We see him fling away all consideration of his own happiness or unhappiness. It is the right — what he believes to be the right — that he will do, and for right's sake. Nothing else matters: —

> God might give me comfort or not, as he pleased. I was bound, but He was free — yea, it was my duty to stand to His word, whether He would ever look upon me or no, or save me at the last. [If God chose to reward him, well and good, but that had nothing to do with his own duty.] If God does not come in, thought I, I will leap off the ladder even blindfold into eternity, sink or swim, come Heaven, come Hell.

It has a familiar ring, has it not! It has the sound of other great resolves of other great hearts. It is well to read and re-read carefully this last passage; for not only does it show us the force and courage and earnestness of Bunyan himself, but it illumines his great work, the "Pilgrim's Progress," and sheds strong light on it whereby we may study it and its meanings more clearly.

THE STORY OF THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

Longfellow speaks of the "Pilgrim's Progress" as a kind of "Divine Comedy" in prose. Though there is a certain resemblance between them, yet the "Pilgrim's Progress" is, after all, by far the more intimate thing of the two. Though Dante is himself the hero, as it were, of the "Divine Comedy," he but observes and looks on at the suffering and punishments and rewards of his fellow-men. He is keenly affected by sympathy for them, it is true, but the sufferings and punishments and rewards are not his. On the other hand, the hero of "Pilgrim's Progress" on his journey does not, in the main, so much look on at the trials and blessings of others as he tastes them for himself. Dante went through hell, purgatory, paradise, observing; Christian goes experiencing, battling, failing, stumbling, recovering himself, overcoming, rejoicing.

Dante's keen appreciation of the sins of man, his stern sense of justice, — that passion of his soul, — were allied with pity, it is true, — we read of his swooning at sight of the suffering of his fellow-beings, — but the courage and determination of Bunyan were mingled with a kind of persistent tenderness which pervades this entire great book of his.

We read what a friend wrote of him, that "in countenance he appeared to be of a stern and rough temper, but in his conversation mild and affable; . . . observing never to boast of himself or his parts, but rather to seem low in his own eyes, and submit himself to the judgment of others; not seeming to revenge injuries; loving to reconcile difference and make friendships with all."

That he had been in hell even as Dante had, a Puritan hell not so vastly different, after all, from the mediæval one, is clear from his own writings: —

> My sins [he says] did so offend the Lord that even in my childhood He did scare and affright me with fearful dreams, and did terrify me with dreadful visions. I have been in my bed greatly afflicted while asleep, with apprehensions of devils and wicked spirits, who still, as I then thought, laboured to draw me away with them, of which I could never be rid. I was afflicted with thoughts of the Day of Judgment night and day, trembling at thoughts of the fearful torments of hell fire.

But such personally tormenting beliefs as these, if they do not utterly wreck the mind, can but leave one a gentler judgment of others, and teach one a certain pity and tenderness for all who with like sensitiveness or morbidness pass through the like torments of an inflamed imagination. Macaulay, writing of the "Pilgrim's

Progress," points out that "the feeling which predominates through the whole book is a feeling of tenderness for weak, timid, and harassed minds."

The story of the "Pilgrim's Progress" is that of a man, Christian, on his way from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City, or, it may be said in less symbolic language, the change of a man's heart and life from sin to righteousness. The entire story is in the form of allegory. It is well to remember that for several centuries this form was the vivid and popular form in which religious and spiritual truths were most often clothed; especially it was in this form that religious and spiritual truths were most frequently taught when they were presented to the people by means of any of the arts. Bunyan's personification of virtues and vices was no new device. It had been used repeatedly, customarily by the churches in their religious dramas or morality and miracle plays, some of these dating as many as five or six hundred years before Bunyan. Bunyan used an old form, but he used it in his own inimitable manner. When we compare even what might be considered the best and most living of the morality plays, "Everyman," with its personified virtues, living characters of Strength, Discretion, Beauty, Knowledge,

and so forth, we find it cold, indeed, alongside of the lifelike reality of "Pilgrim's Progress," where the characters are real people having certain qualities, not certain qualities masquerading as real people. Even Spenser with all his poetical genius never lent to his famous allegory any of that reality which renders Bunyan's personified vices and virtues so haunting and memorable. Spenser's "House of Pride" is not a place whose halls and stairways and upper chambers are familiar to our feet as are those of the "House Beautiful." Nor in all the varied landscape of the "Faërie Queene" shall you come on so fair and memorable a valley as Bunyan's "Valley of Humiliation," low and green and sweet, with its gentle flocks of lambs feeding; nor so worldly a place — drawn to the very life, so that we hear even the very busy hubbub of its streets — as the town of "Vanity." And the "Blatant Beast" and the "deadly sins" — is any one of them as real to us as Bunyan's Apollyon, "straddling" the path before poor Christian, and crying out, exulting, "Here will I spill thy soul"?

Bunyan had the poetic vision; he possessed the poetic and picturesque habit of mind which clothed realities in symbols; moreover, living in a time when spiritual and religious questions

were uppermost in the minds of all deeply earnest men, he had an extraordinary sensitiveness to the moral and spiritual duty and destiny of man; but more than these, he had that great, that notable sincerity which, added to these other qualities, had made his life one of keen torment, much suffering, extraordinary effort, and spiritual triumph. The "Pilgrim's Progress" was written not to please queens and courtiers,—as was the more fanciful "Faërie Queene,"—it was written out of Bunyan's experience and knowledge with much the same purpose, no doubt, which Dante declared actuated the writing of the "Divine Comedy": "to remove those living in this life from a state of misery, and to guide them to a state of happiness."

And to do this Bunyan told of his own experience, wrote out of his own struggles and tears; recounted his own state of misery, his doubts and fears, and his own hard-won triumphs and peace at last. Christian, his hero, whose first adventure on his journey is that of the Slough of Despond and whose last recounted experience is that of entrance into the joy of his Lord, is as sincere as Bunyan, because he *is* Bunyan; he is as real as any one of us, because he is no figment of the brain, no thing imagined, but a piece and parcel of human life and the soul's experience.

And the story, briefly, is as follows: —

There was once upon a time a man named Christian who was oppressed by the burden of his sins which hung like a bundle on his back. One day he read in "the Book" (the Bible, the one book that Bunyan knew well) of the necessity for salvation, or, to put it in terms nearer our own times, the need of righteousness. Then he became oppressed as he thought of his own unrighteousness and (to return to the old wording again) he longed to know what he must do to be saved. His wife and family and neighbors tried to dissuade him from such thoughts; denouncing, scolding, and ridiculing him; believing some "frenzied distemper has got into his head." But he was not to be dissuaded.

They also thought to drive away his distemper by harsh and surly carriages to him; sometimes they would deride, sometimes they would chide, and sometimes they would quite neglect him: [Remembering all the inward gentleness of Bunyan himself the next lines bring us close to him.] wherefore he began to retire himself to his chamber, to pray for and pity them.

One day, while he was walking in the fields, a man named Evangelist asked him the cause of his trouble, and, when Christian told him, he urged him to flee from the City of Destruction, and showed him what he must do to attain to

the Celestial City. He pointed him across a wide field to a little wicket gate. At this, Christian was told, he must enter, and from there on he would be directed to the way he should go.

Then Christian ran toward the place pointed out to him. "But his wife and children, perceiving it, began to cry after him to return." But he put his fingers in his ears that he might not hear their entreaties and ran on. (There comes to mind involuntarily Bunyan's own account in prison how his love for his wife and children, "especially my poor blind child," "those great mercies" of which he was all "too, too fond," called to him and would have deterred him from his resolve.)

Also Christian's friends and neighbors, believing him mad, would have detained him. And, indeed, Obstinate and Pliable, friends of his, followed after, resolved to bring him back by force. But being unable to persuade him, Obstinate turned back, and Pliable and Christian continued across the field toward the wicket gate together.

But on the way thither they both fell into a boggy place called the Slough of Despond. This was enough for Pliable; scrambling out of the slough "on the side which was nearest to his house," he returned home.

Christian, however, struggled on, and went upon his journey, yet feeling all the while the great weight of the bundle of sins upon his back.

Later he fell in with one named Worldly-Wiseman, who advised Christian not to take that course pointed out to him by Evangelist, but to turn aside, rather, in a path that would lead him to the town of Morality, where dwelt an old gentleman named Legality. This same Legality, or his young son Civility, would there rid Christian of his burden.

But as legality (or the law), whatever its decisions, cannot wipe away sin, nor civility do away with it, so Christian learned that the road Worldly-Wiseman pointed out could never lead him to righteousness. Then Evangelist came once more to Christian's rescue, and, rebuking him for having turned aside from the path, set him again in the right road.

So Christian came at last to the wicket gate, and entered a straight and narrow way.

Somewhat farther along he came to the "House of the Interpreter." Here he was welcomed by the master of the house, and was shown many things of interest, which, being interpreted, would help him to that wisdom necessary to his journey.

In this place the story reads not unlike Dante's

"Inferno," for here, even as Virgil showed Dante the souls of those who had sinned, so the Interpreter showed Christian those who, telling of their own sin, warned and instructed him and roused him to pity.

Leaving the Interpreter, Christian came at last by a narrow path to the foot of a cross, and as he came to it the heavy burden of his sins fell from him.

And behold three Shining Ones came to him and saluted him with "Peace be to thee"; so the first said to him, "Thy sins be forgiven"; the second stript him of his rags and clothed him with Change of Raiment. The third also set a mark in his forehead, and gave him a roll with a seal upon it, which he bid him look on as he ran, and that he should give it in at the Celestial Gate. So they went their way. Then Christian gave three leaps for joy, and went on singing.

From here on Christian met many fellow-travelers. There is not room here to tell of them all: Sloth, Presumption, Hypocrisy, Mistrust, and others.

THE HILL OF DIFFICULTY AND THE CHAMBER OF PEACE

He had not gone far on his way, ere there rose before him a great hill called the Hill of Difficulty. Midway up the ascent was an arbor, meant only for a place of rest and refreshment

for pilgrims; but here Christian, heedless, slept some precious hours away. Here, too, he lost some time because, forgetting his roll, he was obliged to return to the arbor for it.

Beyond this he came finally, after the sun had set, to a stately palace called Beautiful, a resting-place built by the Lord of the Hill for the safety and entertainment of pilgrims. This is, perhaps, the happiest part of the "Pilgrim's Progress," where in the stately palace Christian is hospitably entertained by four beautiful damsels: Discretion, Prudence, Piety, and Charity. Here he sat him down to supper with them and they discoursed of the Lord of the Hill and of his loving kindness. After that Christian was conducted for the night to a large upper chamber whose windows opened toward the sunrising, and the name of this chamber was Peace.

Now before the four damsels allowed him to go farther on his journey, they clothed Christian in armor from head to foot and placed a sword in his hand, for they knew that between them and the Delectable Mountain which lay outside the Celestial City stretched such places as should try hard the courage of Christian.

Then the four accompanied him to the foot of the Hill of Difficulty and there bade him God-speed and good-bye and gave him a loaf of bread,

a bottle of wine, and a cluster of raisins; then he went on his way.

Christian was now come by this time to the Valley of Humiliation.

Now, whereas in a later part of the story it is shown that this Valley of Humiliation is a place "rich with grass and covered with flocks"; and whereas we are told that some pilgrims find pleasure in its low green fields, yet so did not Christian. For it was here and in no other place that Christian encountered Apollyon, a "foul fiend," and here that he fought with him very desperately for many hours until his strength was well-nigh spent.

Then Apollyon straddled quite over the whole breadth of the way and said: "I am void of fear in this matter, prepare thyself to die; for I swear, by my infernal Den, that thou shalt go no farther; here will I spill thy soul."

So, without doubt Apollyon's victory seemed sure. Yet in the end it was Christian who came off conqueror. A fearful fight it was:—

In this combat [says Bunyan] no man can imagine, unless he had seen and heard as I did, what yelling and hideous roaring Apollyon made . . . and on the other side what sighs and groans burst from Christian's heart. I never saw him all the while give so much as one pleasant look, till he perceived he had wounded Apollyon with his two-edged sword; then indeed he did smile and look upward; but it was the dreadfullest sight that ever I saw.

More than this, at the end of the Valley of Humiliation lay another valley, the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and Christian must needs go through this also. It was a fearful place beset with snares and nets and fears and darkness, "pits and pitfalls; deep holes and shelvings down." Yet Christian, by means of care and a weapon called All-Prayer, came safely toward the end of the Valley, and there overtook one called Faithful; and from here on they traveled together, meeting many others by the way, notably one Talkative, one of the best drawn and most lifelike of all the characters.

So traveling together Christian and Faithful came to a town called Vanity, a place which swarmed with people and wherein was held a very great fair, kept all the year round. Here, though they behaved themselves only as Christians, despising or turning from the things of Vanity, they were ill-treated by the inhabitants of the town. Here they were brought at last for judgment before its court, and here Faithful was condemned to death.

After this, saddened, yet accompanied now by one Hopeful, Christian traveled on once more. Ahead of them lay a grievous adventure in Doubting Castle, where Giant Despair beat and mistreated them. Yet from this, too, after much

suffering they escaped and came, in time, to the Delectable Mountains, where there were "Gardens and Orchards and Vineyards and Fountains of Water; where also they drank and washed themselves, and did freely eat of the Vineyards."

Here, too, were certain shepherds keeping their flocks and whose names were Knowledge, Experience, Watchful, and Sincere; and these conducted Christian and Hopeful and showed them many things both of reason and wisdom, and of hope and of warning. And from these Delectable Mountains, far beyond, the Celestial City could be seen.

THE ENCHANTED GROUND

After this the tale comes soon to a close. Other difficulties befall the pilgrims, but the end is in view. There is one adventure, that of the Enchanted Ground, which reminds one strongly of the "Lotus-Land" of the "Odyssey": —

They went till they came into a certain country, whose air naturally tended to make one drowsy, if he came a stranger into it. And here Hopeful began to be very dull and heavy of sleep; wherefore he said unto Christian, I do now begin to grow so drowsy that I can scarcely hold up mine eyes, let us lie down here and take one nap.

Christian: By no means, said the other, lest sleeping we never awake more.

Hopeful: Why, my Brother? Sleep is sweet to the laboring man; we may be refreshed if we take a nap.

Christian: Do you remember that one of the shepherds bid us beware of the Enchanted Ground? He meant by that, that we should beware of sleeping; wherefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober.

From here, having got over the Enchanted Ground, the pilgrims entered the Country of Beulah "whose air was very sweet and pleasant."

This, too, like the Palace Beautiful, is one of the places in the pilgrimage where the reader lingers as willingly as did the pilgrims.

Here they heard continually the singing of Birds and saw every day the Flowers appear in the earth, and heard the voice of the Turtle in the land. In this country the Sun shineth night and day; wherefore this was beyond the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and also out of the reach of Giant Despair, neither could they from this place so much as see Doubting Castle. Here they were in sight of the City. . . . Here they had no want of Corn and Wine; . . . And drawing near to the City, they had yet a more perfect view thereof. It was builded of Pearls and Precious stones, also the street thereof was paved with Gold; so that by reason of the natural glory of the City, and the reflection of the Sunbeams upon it, Christian with desire fell sick.

After this respite they come at last to what is perhaps the darkest difficulty of all, the dark river "without a bridge." This, they are told, they must cross before they can enter the City which lies beyond it. At this the pilgrims, and especially Christian, "began to despond in

their minds." They looked about, hoping for escape, but there was none.

Finally, they entered the water and Christian began to sink in the sorrows of death and to despair that he should ever see the "land of milk and honey. . . . And with that a great darkness and horror fell upon Christian, so that he could not see before him."

Hopeful had, indeed, much difficulty to comfort Christian, who, though he had with courage passed through so many dangers, appeared like to be totally overcome by this last one. But remembering the promise of the All-Merciful, "When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee," he took courage yet once more. Thus they got over the dark waters at last, and at the other side were met and were led by Shining Ones into the City of God. Here a company of the Heavenly Host and of the King's Trumpeters met them and led them into the City with rejoicing and melodious noises and with ten thousand welcomes. "And lo, as they entered they were transfigured . . . and all the Bells in the City rang for joy." So, with their journey and sufferings all gone by, the pilgrims are at last of the "company of the Blessed."

This, told only very briefly, is the story of the "Pilgrim's Progress." The book abounds in

striking phrases, truths strikingly set, and characters curiously lifelike. Here are no mere empty allegorical figures, but human beings of flesh and blood, friends, fellows, those of our own kind, sharers in our hopes, touched with our infirmities.

"All the forms," says Macaulay, "who cross or overtake the pilgrims, giants and hobgoblins, ill-favored ones and shining ones . . . all are actually existing beings to us. . . . Bunyan is almost the only writer who ever gave to the abstract the interest of the concrete. . . . The mind of Bunyan . . . was so imaginative that personifications, when he dealt with them, became men."

Owing to this lifelikeness of the characters and experiences in the book, Froude declares: "The 'Pilgrim's Progress' is a book which, when once read, can never be forgotten. We, too, every one of us, are pilgrims, on the same road, and images and illustrations come back upon us from so faithful an itinerary, as we encounter similar trials and learn for ourselves the accuracy with which Bunyan has described them."

It is Christian himself who is the most real and lifelike of all the characters, a genuine human being with the faults and failures and mistakes and timorousness, misgivings and returning courage of our own selves, as we, too,

journey past doubts, difficulties, joys, temptations, weariness of well-doing, meadows of ease and refreshment, discouragements and dark floods, in the journey of our lives.

So the very humanness of it all would seem to give the "Pilgrim's Progress" sufficient claim upon our sympathies and appreciation; but there are deeper reasons still, as there always are deep reasons for the lasting greatness of great books.

WHY IS THIS BOOK SO GREAT?

We have found in studying other great books that one main reason for their greatness and their continued appeal lies in some one experience or *motif* which each sets out strongly and clearly. The experience is one common to humanity or comprises one of the ideals of humanity which the poet for reasons of his own selects and chooses and interprets for us. In the "Odyssey" we find this predominant *motif* or ideal to be Patience; in the "Divine Comedy," Justice; in Goethe's "Faust," Self-Sacrifice; in "Pilgrim's Progress" we find it to be Courage.

Perhaps, at first glance, this may seem somewhat surprising. Ulysses was patient; Dante loved justice; Faust attained to self-sacrifice; but can this timorous Christian be regarded as an

exemplar of courage? But if you look closer, perhaps you will see that it is just the timorousness of Christian, just his blunders and mistakes, which seal and establish the more securely his courage. It is true the courage underlying the "Pilgrim's Progress" is not that brilliant occasional courage of the heroes of romance; it is not the striking or exceptional thing; not a colored, panoplied display of pomp and circumstance; there are no trumpets of victory in honor of great and particular heroism, unless one chooses so to remember the melodious noises of the King's Trumpeters at the very last, which, however, greet no glorious victory, but welcome rather two very tired and way-weary travelers. Here, in this story, we see that daily, persistent, humble courage which must attend all those who would attain righteousness, and all those who would come happily to the end of any difficult and serious undertaking.

There are, of course, occasions here, too, when a stronger kind of courage is needed, and at such times Christian is able to summon it, as when he fights with Apollyon, or when he faces the dread darkness of the Valley of Death; but in the main the courage is a more patient and less triumphant one — such courage as we see daily in the living of noble lives, in the meeting of daily

difficulties or trials, the persistent overcoming of daily discouragement or despair or lassitude; the bravery above all to go on; the courage of renewed effort; the courage of a fixed purpose maintained in the face of how many dangers and how much difficult circumstance.

In the beginning of the tale Mr. Worldly-Wiseman warns Christian of the hard way: —

> Thou art like to meet with in the way which thou goest, *wearisomeness, painfulness, hunger, perils, nakedness, swords, lions, dragons, darkness, and, in a word, death and what not.*

That is a summing-up, indeed! And Christian listens and is afraid.

Now let us recall Bunyan's account of his own experience of his determination taken in prison. You remember the timorous beginning, the fears and affections that beset and besought him; you remember the painfully vivid imagination that pointed out the direst possibilities; you recall the fear of death; and the tempter urging that Bunyan might, for all his pains, attain in the end nothing but hell.

Then past all these you remember the sure march of his spirit, the strong resolve, finally taken, the courage regained: "God might give me comfort or not, as he pleased," he says. "If God does not come in, thought I, I will leap off

the ladder even blindfold into eternity, sink or swim, come Heaven, come Hell."

COURAGE REGAINED

The timorous fears at first, yes; but at last the lost courage grasped firmly once more, the courage to do and be what he conceived it right for him to do and be. And in the "Pilgrim's Progress" we find Bunyan's hero tried even as he himself was tried, fearful just as Bunyan was; and we find him courageous, not less. Here is a notable instance.

When Christian comes at last to the very entrance to the Valley of the Shadow of Death, he meets two men running toward him, fleeing from it, and questions them: —

Christian: Whither are you going?

Men: They said, Back, back — and we would have you do so, too, if either life or peace is prized by you.

Christian: Why, what's the matter? said Christian.

Men: Matter! said they; we were going that way as you are going, and went as far as we durst; and indeed we were almost past coming back; for had we gone a little farther, we had not been here to bring the news to thee.

Christian: But what have you met with? said Christian.

Men: Why, we were almost in the Valley of the Shadow of Death; but that by good hap we looked before us, and saw the danger before we came to it.

Christian: But what have you seen? said Christian.

Men: Seen! Why the Valley itself, which is as dark as pitch; we also saw there the Hobgoblins, Satyrs, and Dragons of the Pit; we heard also in that Valley a continual howling and yelling, as of a people under unutterable misery, who there sat bound in afflictions of irons; and over that Valley hangs the discouraging clouds of Confusion; Death also doth always spread his wings over it. In a word it is every whit dreadful, being utterly without order.

Here is something to shake the heart of the stoutest, and the heart of Christian is especially sensitive to fear. Moreover, it is not to be forgotten that he was yet sorely spent and wounded from his fight with Apollyon. We recall after the fearful combat Christian's smile and look upward; "the dreadfullest sight that ever I saw," says Bunyan.

Yet Christian's reply when it comes is sure. There is nothing glorious about it; no swashbuckling, no declarations, no threats, no heroics; only, his mind made up, his courage gripped close, his resolve once more taken; yes, even in the very face of all this.

I perceive not yet [he replied], by what you have said, but that this is my way to the desired haven. . . .

So they parted, and Christian went on his way, but still with his Sword drawn in his hand, for fear lest he should be assaulted.

Now it were well to recall once more Bunyan's account of his own fears in prison; his fearful

dread of death, and of those torments he conceived might attack him after death. Note how close this "Pilgrim's Progress" (much of which, it is thought, he wrote while he was in prison) is, not only to our own experiences of fear and faint-heartedness and new resolve, but how it is drawn true, line for line, to Bunyan's experience. It is illuminating to recall how in the face of the most haunting fears and dire possibilities Bunyan himself went on, without regard to his own welfare or reward. It is well to read the stalwart words again: —

> God might give me comfort or not, as He pleased. If God come not in, thought I, I will leap off the ladder even blindfold into eternity, sink or swim, come Heaven, come Hell.

Over and over in the "Pilgrim's Progress," this humbler yet stalwart kind of courage is insisted on, over and over it is set before us, until we ourselves, as we read, gain a kind of reflected courage, too; and our own strength is stirred. He is like ourselves, this Christian, only more persistently courageous, braver, in the end as brave as we might wish ourselves to be. So the book not only gives us, as do all great books, a better understanding of life, but stirs us to a nobler living. We pluck up heart somewhat; the book affects us, helps to mould us; we add some

of Christian's courage to our own. Like Christian after his happy discourse with the four gracious damsels — Discretion, Prudence, Piety, Charity — or his converse with the Shepherds — Knowledge, Experience, Watchful, and Sincere, there on the Delectable Mountains — we are able to take up our journey with a happier heart and meet its difficulties with renewed courage.

CHAPTER XI

THE BOOK OF JOB

Of unknown date, . . . and unknown authorship, the language impregnated with strange idioms and strange allusions, un-Jewish in form, and in fiercest hostility with Judaism, it hovers like a meteor over the old Hebrew literature, in it, but not of it, compelling the acknowledgment of itself by its own internal majesty, yet exerting no influence over the minds of the people, never alluded to, and scarcely ever quoted, till at last the light which it had heralded rose up full over the world in Christianity.

FROUDE.

If a Book comes from the heart it will contrive to reach other hearts.

CARLYLE.

"THERE was a man in the land of Uz." That is the way this great book starts out. The name conveys little to most of us. The land of Uz is not to be found on our maps now. It is many centuries since it has been known to any one. It is generally surmised that the land lay somewhere in Arabia, but nothing is known of it with certainty. All information concerning the writer of the book is even more vague. He with the very country he wrote of has been swept into the great mass of forgotten things. Yet this great work, with its simple story-book beginning, "There was a man in the land of Uz," still towers in our literature like a peak above all

other peaks, for it is generally agreed that there is no other book to compare with it in grandeur of conception, beauty of treatment, and depth of meaning.

We can be the more sure of its vitality and greatness when we remember that it is great, despite the fact that many different sects and peoples have regarded it almost entirely from a religious rather than a human standpoint; when we recall that many have not failed to weary themselves in quarrels regarding its doctrinal meanings; that it has been used for reproof and admonition; that it has been made the subject of dull sermons by thousands of dry people.

Mention the Book of Job without reference to it as great literature, and in the minds of many of us is called up an idea of something dull or dreary or gloomy, something really little understood, though much preached about. Many of us have never read it through, or, if we have, it is not unlikely we have read it as a kind of religious duty. There are those who still read it a chapter only at a time, a daily "chapter from the Bible," thus missing, of course, all the continuity, and most of the beauty and meaning of the wonderful story. In studying it here it is well to regard it not from any religious standpoint whatever, but rather only as a notable part of world literature.

The better to escape the old habits and associations which in many cases still cling to our ideas of Bible study, it is to be strongly recommended that the book be studied from one of the many good editions now published in which it is bound as a separate volume, treated as a book in itself, and not as a part of the Old Testament. Moreover, it can hardly be urged too strongly that this great book be read in connection with a good commentary.

Read in this way and studied carefully, we have no need to fear that the story of the Man of Uz will seem dull. It is one of the most fascinating stories of all time. Carlyle says of it in a chapter of his "Heroes and Hero Worship": "I call that, apart from all theories about it," he says — and I ask you to note very carefully that parenthesis, "apart from all theories about it," for I take that to include all the dry-as-dust sermons that were ever preached about it — "I call that," he says, "apart from all theories about it, one of the grandest things ever written with pen. . . . A noble Book; all men's Book! It is our first oldest statement of the never ending Problem, — a man's testing, and God's ways with him here in this earth. And all in such free, flowing outlines; grand in its sincerity, in its simplicity; in its epic melody and repose of recon-

cilement. There is the seeing eye, the mildly understanding heart. So *true* every way; true eyesight and vision for all things; material things no less than spiritual; the Horse, — 'hast thou clothed his neck with *thunder?*' he '*laughs* at the shaking of the spear!'"

Many vivid and poetic descriptions could be quoted. Carlyle remembering them goes on to say: "Such living likenesses were never since drawn." And then he calls attention to the spiritual insight as well, the great human interest, the warm human understanding: "Sublime sorrow, sublime reconciliation; oldest choral melody as of the heart of mankind; — so soft, and great; as the summer midnight, as the world with its seas and stars! There is nothing written, I think, in the Bible or out of it, of equal literary merit."

We turn again to the story with its simple beginning: "There was a man in the land of Uz." No book in or out of the Bible of equal literary merit! That is saying a good deal. But let us see.

THE TIMES IN WHICH THE STORY WAS WRITTEN

When we seek for the time and place in which this story was written, we find ourselves on unsure ground. It is supposed, on the evidence of the book itself, that the story was written later

than the Proverbs of Solomon. By its form we know it must have been written at a time when the literary art of the Hebrews had advanced and developed and ripened; for it is told in no haphazard way, it shows great care of construction. It is a great work of art. But it is practically impossible to assign it with any certainty to any fixed period.

The tale is placed in what was, it is generally agreed, a part of Arabia. Its hero is a sheikh of great wealth and power. Yet the whole tone and spiritual color of the work is distinctly Hebrew. Its author, it is believed, was a Hebrew, perhaps a Hebrew in exile. In any case it seems certain that much of his life was lived away from his own people; a traveled man, we think, just as Homer was, a man who had seen much of life, who knew the tribes of the desert and the cities of the plain, who had seen the great tombs and pyramids, who had witnessed the pomp and splendor of old Egypt; a man, too, who had lived much with nature and observed with quick and reverent and speculative eye the wonders of the natural world. He was a man of broad thought and deep sympathies; a man of strong feeling, of independent opinion, yet of gentle tolerance, — all these things are evident in the book itself.

The more we study the story of the Man of Uz

the more is clear the writer's desire to criticize earnestly and to condemn certain religious beliefs and dogmas current in his day.

It is important for us to remember that this man, like writers of all other great books, is an interpreter. This is not merely *his* opinion; this man, like the author of all other great books, is the *voice of a people*. Before he put his own doubts of the dogmas of a fixed faith into words, other men had doubted; before he found a narrow creed too small to hold what he knew of life, others had doubted and gone away unsatisfied and unfed from the altars of the Most High.

To understand this deep dissatisfaction, we must study somewhat the religion and doctrines which this book sets itself to oppose. And to do this, we must once more, as in studying the "Odyssey" and the "Divine Comedy," leave behind us the world and its beliefs as they exist to-day. The Book of Job was written long before the coming of Christ. The religion at which it strikes so openly and forcefully is that held and practiced some thousands of years ago by the Jews.

While other religions of the East wandered vaguely or craftily in mysticism, while that of the Greeks allied itself frankly with nature, the old Hebrew religion preserved at its center that

powerful moral idea of right and wrong, good and evil, which made it the most moral and spiritual religion of its day. Here was nothing vague, here no comfortable Pantheon with many and varied gods; here were no whimsical deities to deal with, neither Apollo nor Aphrodite nor Isis nor Osiris; but One, the All-Mighty, who dealt rather with man, portioning out just deserts to the good and to the evil. This God was a ruler and a judge. We see here a dignified religion having at its center the very noble idea of man's moral responsibility to one higher power and to his neighbors, since that higher power protected his neighbor as well as himself. Yet this religion, so vastly more spiritual than many another of its time, left the hearts of many, and along with these the heart of the writer of Job, unsatisfied. It was an old religion even in that day, and its ancient simplicity and nobility of ideal had, as time passed, become crystallized, had become encrusted by an elaborate ritual, and could not change along with man's changing experience, nor develop with his developing intelligence, nor grow with his growing spiritual needs. Man, or at least the higher type of man, the *thinking* man, was beginning to outgrow the old belief, even while the lesser intelligences still "regarded their creed as a sacred total to which

nothing might be added and from which nothing might be taken away." Though we are not told so, it is circumstantially evident that the writer of the Book of Job, if a Jew (which we believe him to have been), was a dissenter, a nonconformist of his day. He was looked on, no doubt, by the "faithful" as a pariah — as a danger and a menace to his own. For had he not questioned the old established creed? Had he not set himself against the teachings of the high priests? He had dared to think for himself, and like his great hero Job, he had, in all probability, determined to argue his cause himself before the Most High, as we see him arguing it and with what eloquence in the Book of Job.

We know nothing of him personally, beyond what the Book of Job itself reveals; but the revelation is sufficiently definite and clear. It seems likely that the writer separated himself not only from the narrow creed of his people, but separated himself from their country and society as well. Froude and many others suppose him to have been an exile. His hero cannot fairly be called a Jew. He lives in a land and among customs strange to the Jewish people of that day. The author mentions no Jewish traditions and refers to none of the old Jewish teachings save in this way: he makes both the material and

spiritual experience of his hero to be things directly opposed to and directly disproving the old Jewish beliefs. The blow he strikes is a strong one and aimed with unmistakable intent at the teachings of the established church of his day.

Many suppose that this Job of whom he writes was well known in the times of the writer, a kind of proverb among the people: "his name, like that of a Priam in Greece, the symbol of fallen greatness, and his misfortunes the problem of philosophers." Job, a great sheikh, a man noted for two things, for his goodness and his misfortunes; from these two main facts the full stream of the story flows: goodness and misfortunes. A good man, afflicted. This you will note is no very new circumstance or theme; most of us have observed the circumstance frequently enough; and the men of that day had without doubt observed it also. To make his point more clear, the writer selects not merely a common type of good man, sorely tried, but the most uncommonly good man — "a perfect man," we are told, — and tried as no other has been tried. The scene is set for the drama; and the challenge, one might almost call it, is thrown down by the author at the foot of the religion of his day. For that religion, as we have observed,

taught that God was a just God, dealing out mercies to them that deserved them and kept his commandments, and punishing evil, visiting the sins of the fathers on the children even unto the third and fourth generation.

But here is a notable experience of life itself; here is a problem to be solved. If God is a just God, how then are Job's misfortunes to be accounted for? (And again we must keep in mind that Job is not a mere imaginary hero, and his story an imaginary one; Job is but the embodied experience of many other good men who, despite their goodness, have suffered.) How is the old eye-for-an-eye tooth-for-a-tooth religion to account satisfactorily for this? What answer has it to give, not to the unthinking multitude, who accept its teachings without question, but to the thinking man who sees and observes and preserves his God-given right to question? The old Hebrew religion of that day had no adequate answer to give. So the writer of this book, himself a thinking man, a man with a magnificent mind of his own, sets himself to answer it; not as with assumed or divine authority, mind you; he has not constituted himself nor been constituted a high-priest; he merely uses his human prerogative to write out of his own human experience and the experiences of his fellow-men.

He will set down the truth as he has seen it, touched it, and suffered for it, no doubt, day by day.

Here was a fact he had noted often, one which had puzzled him and troubled him. He had seen frequently, and saw the more widely, no doubt, as he traveled more and thought more, misery and sorrow not infrequently visited on the virtuous, and saw again and again, even as we see it now, the wicked prosper. To his alert mind the question must have come pointedly: "Why are God's judgments as they are?" "Why, viewed in the light of a system of just rewards and just punishments, are God's dealings with mankind opaque?"

He could not be content to leave so vital a question unsolved, could not leave it until he had found some more fitting answer to the perplexing and baffling testimony of life and his own experience.

Gradually, in his own soul, the higher spiritual conviction must have developed; gradually the nobler spiritual standard must have arisen. If man's virtue was based only on the reward man was to receive in pay for his virtue, if his avoidance of evil was based only on his fear of punishment, then man was, like his creeds, poor indeed in spirituality. Worse still, if this was so,

God himself was but a mediocre Master, willing to be served only for hire and for no better motive.

Experience of life told the writer that none of this was true, however much his church might teach it to him. His faith in the old creed and ritual must have fallen away, probably little by little; yet he must have known, too, that, behind all possible fallacies of creed, the truth remained untouched. So we know he must have set himself to find it.

That truth once found, he must have longed with the generous impulse of a great man to share it with others. As he grew older, and saw men bound narrowly by a creed that he believed false, the longing may have grown in him. Perhaps, after many wanderings, "in some hour of burning memory and revived experience," he, having learned, meantime, the poet's art, selected from his own life, or perhaps from the life of some well-known sheikh of that day, facts and incidents, and wove them with poetic skill into a great drama, a great story, the story of a man who served God without reward. So, his own spiritual convictions clear, he began writing that simple beginning: "There was a man in the land of Uz."

THE STORY TOLD BRIEFLY

There was a man of Uz, named Job; a perfect and upright man who feared God and served Him; a great man respected and loved. Seven sons and three daughters had been given him. His sheep numbered seven thousand, his camels three thousand; he had five hundred yoke of oxen and "a very great household;" "so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the East."

Now there was a day when the sons of God assembled to present themselves before the Lord in heaven, and Satan among them. And the Lord, taking pleasure in Job's goodness, asked Satan if he had observed Job, that there was none like him, a perfect and an upright man.

But Satan answered that there was little wonder Job served God. Did he do so for nought? Had not God hedged him about with mercies? Let God take from him all these mercies and Job would curse God to his face.

Then the Almighty gave permission that the test should be made, stipulating only that Job himself be spared.

So one day there came to Job a messenger crying, "The tribes from the desert have fallen upon thy oxen and thy asses, and have taken

them away, slaying also thy servants. I only am escaped to tell thee."

And another came in the same manner to report that the fire of heaven had fallen and burned up the sheep and the servants who tended them.

And still another came hurrying to report that the Chaldeans had fallen upon the camels and carried them away, slaying all the servants of Job with the sword.

As this one finished speaking, there came yet a fourth messenger, crying out, "Thy sons and thy daughters were feasting in their eldest brother's house and there came a great wind out of the desert and the house fell upon thy children and they are dead."

Then Job rent his mantle, the customary sign of sorrow and submission, and bowed himself down and prayed, and worshiped God, saying, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

When again the sons of God presented themselves in heaven, the Lord once more spoke to Satan concerning Job: "Hast thou considered that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man; one who holdeth fast his integrity?"

Then Satan said: "I have observed that a man will give all he hath for his life — for his life is

dearer than all his possessions. Put forth thy hand and touch Job's body and he will curse thee to thy face."

So God gave permission that the test should be made, stipulating only that Job's life be saved.

Then Job was smitten with a loathsome and painful disease. In the midst of all these calamities, with family, wealth, possessions, and health all taken from him, yet Job preserved his integrity, saying: "Shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?"

As time passed, news of Job's great affliction reaching the ears of his friends, there came three from afar off across the desert, who had made an appointment together to come and mourn with him and comfort him; they were Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar.

And when they saw him they raised their voices and wept and sat down in silence by him. There was little for them to say, not only because Job's grief was great, but because they believed (according to the teachings of their religion) that these calamities could not have come to Job undeserved; they must have come as a punishment for his sins.

When at last Job complained bitterly of his misery, they set themselves to reprove him for his wickedness, and urged him to repentance.

This was but a new blow, for Job, secure in his own integrity, knew his friends accused him falsely. So they who had meant to be a comfort to him did but bring him the more misery. Under this new affliction, Job again longed for death and demanded passionately to be shown why the Almighty should so have afflicted him.

Shocked at such a demand, his friends accused him of impiety and presumption, Zophar pointing out to him significantly what reward might be looked for by the ungodly.

Job had longed for the comfort of his friends, but though he had enjoyed it in happier times, now when he needed it most it was not at hand; the waters of their pity and mercy were dried up.

As the stream of brooks they pass away. . . . What time they wax warm they vanish, when it is hot they are consumed out of their place; . . . the caravans of Tema looked for them, the companies of Sheba waited for them.

Now in Job's need they cannot be found. Overwhelmed with his misery and suffering, he turns from these indignantly to God. Again he prays for death, he even upbraids God.

Thou inquirest after my iniquity, thou searchest after my sin, and thou knowest that I am not wicked.

"In what other poem in the world," says Froude, "is there pathos deep as this? With

experience so stern as his, it was not for Job to be calm, and self-possessed, and delicate in his words. He speaks not what he knows, but what he feels; and without fear the writer allows him to throw out his passion all genuine as it rises, not overmuch caring how nice ears might be offended, but contented to be true to the real emotion of a genuine human heart."

His friends turn on him now in earnest. Eliphaz voices the teaching of their religion and the rest follow his lead; a teaching lofty in sound but degrading in essence, which would rob man of his real dignity and the dignity of his relation to God.

Thy own mouth condemneth thee, and thine own lips testify against thee. What is man that he should be clean, and he that is born of a woman that he should be righteous? Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints, yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight; how much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water.

Under the unjust accusations of his religion and his friends, Job begins now to be more calm; he begins now to see more clearly. Before this he has contended passionately with his fate. He has hoped for sympathy and earthly comfort. But his earthly companions and the teachings of religion itself have failed him. All of his hopes are in ruins around him; yet out of these rises

a yet better hope. Neither his friends nor his religion have justified him. He begins to hope now that in the spirit after death he shall see God and shall be vindicated.

Once more he goes over his bold, undoctrinal assertions. He has seen the wicked prosper, and the good go unrewarded; yet somewhere, somehow, God shall redeem him; literally, *justify* him.

So once more he seems to his pious and orthodox friends Job the blasphemer. They cannot see that his vision is gradually becoming clearer; that he is coming close to the truth; that he is beginning to understand that man's measurements cannot measure God, nor man's creeds wholly comprehend Him. He is beginning to get glimpses of great truths, only glimpses, as yet; he is beginning to grasp a larger faith, a nobler ideal. He is beginning to see, what Bunyan saw clearly so many years later, that though God give or withhold reward, man's duty and integrity must stand fast; that man is bound, but God is free; that to serve God and love Him, not to measure and judge Him, is man's whole duty.

Then, once more, flinging back the scorn and condemnation and lies of these men who have attempted to measure God and himself, Job asserts once more his integrity. In the thirty-

first chapter he goes over once again his life, and his actions and his ideals in the old days, the days of his prosperity. It is a glorious chapter of self-vindication, not haughty, not self-righteous. It is rather the speech of one who remembers past joys in the midst of fearful sorrows; who longs to believe God just and yearns better to understand God's unfathomable dealings. Then follows the splendid and daring wish, so characteristic not alone of Job but of all great hearts and great minds, that God Himself — not an envoy who may or may not carry God's message aright — would draw near, and answer him, and reveal to him these things that so sorely puzzle and perplex him.

A DISCREPANCY IN THE STORY

And just here there comes a discrepancy in the story. Job, with magnificent sincerity and audacity, calls on God to reveal Himself. And in answer to that splendid prayer there appears not God, but a fourth "friend" — Elihu — who now, on his own account, undertakes to reason doctrinally with Job. Following on what has gone before, this seems a flaw. The mind of the reader is a little bewildered by it. We feel there is a discrepancy somewhere. The splendid bold strain of the poem seems broken by a lesser

though still lovely music. The sentences of Elihu are beautiful, that is, in themselves, but their teachings are at variance, apparently, with just that splendid and bold truth which the writer has set himself to reveal. Commentators have puzzled much over the speeches of Elihu; but many now believe that these speeches do not belong to the original, but were inserted later by some writer, some "conformist," perhaps, who found this big massive work a little too bold, a little too iconoclastic, who saw an opportunity to use it as a great religious work, could certain undoctrinal things be brought into line. So Elihu, speaking after Job's last great speech, and upholding, or at least sustaining, the more orthodox views, seems to have somewhat defeated Job's views and drawn a veil once more over the splendid vision. Moreover, his words are at variance with the end of the story as it stands.

Certain it is that the story reads far more connectedly, far more grandly, and preserves its integrity, as it were, if we omit these chapters altogether, beautiful though they are in themselves in imagery and phrase; if we go straight from the end of the thirty-first chapter, which closes with Job's wish to speak face to face with the Almighty, to the direct answer to that wish, with which answer the thirty-eighth chapter

begins. In it God Himself speaks with Job in those glorious, well-known verses, which, while the author puts them, in the drama, in the mouth of God, are really drawn from his own deep experience and his own heart. In substance they are this: Shall Job (Job representing man in general) presume to measure and judge of the Almighty?

> Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.
>
> Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth? —

And so on through four glorious, unmatched chapters. In them God speaks with Job "not as the healing spirit in the heart of man; but as Job had at first demanded, the outward God, the Almighty Creator of the universe, and clad in the terrors and the glory of it. Job, in his first precipitancy, had desired to reason with Him on his government. The poet, in gleaming lines, describes for an answer the universe as it then

was known, the majesty and awfulness of it; and then asks whether it is this which he requires to have explained to him, or which he believes himself capable of conducting."

At the end of all this, Job is not, you will notice, struck down by any sense of sin, though he "repents in dust and ashes." He abhors himself not for sin, not for the unorthodox daring of his belief, but for the *smallness* of his belief, the smallness of his understanding. A confession of his faith in God and of his own fallibility he now binds together as the offering of his heart and brain. Here is nothing servile. It is not servile for a "perfect and upright man," who has thought widely and experienced deeply, to admit that, wide and deep as he has gone, life and infinity, vast, wonderful, are wider, deeper yet. Here is no mock humility, no beating of the breast, no wailing that he is a sinner. Here is a man who has dared speak direct with God, and some inner and outer dignity clings to him from that. He does not recoil from God, overwhelmed. He seems rather to draw nearer to him. Before this he has heard of God from others, as we hear of one of whom others bring us report; but now with his own eyes he sees him.

Then Job answered the Lord and said, . . . Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I

uttered that I understood not, things too wonderful for me which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak. . . . I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.

Then God speaks to the three friends of Job and rebukes them. Job, passionate as he had been, had not tried to shut up God's everlasting truths in little shells of petty human beliefs, nor had he accused himself falsely in the hope of winning God's favor. He had dared be a man, had thought honestly for himself. Above everything he had clung to his integrity. God warns Job's three friends that they have misrepresented the Most High. "For ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath." He bids them make amends, "lest I deal with you after your folly." And Job prayed for his friends, and his prayer was answered.

And from then Job's sorrows were turned to blessing, and even all that he had lost was bestowed on him, and he lived long in the favor of God.

This, briefly told, is the story of Job, the Man of Uz. It is first of all intended to criticize and disapprove a narrow, dogmatic religious interpretation of God's dealings with men. It stands as the first recorded struggle of the hearts and minds

of many men against a narrow and orthodox belief. But while this is very evidently the intellectual intent of the book, the purpose of it is broader yet. It is not merely iconoclastic, but constructive. It breaks down a narrow spiritual conception, but it builds up a broad and towering one, whose foundations are laid deep and broad. The high intent of the author seems to be to set out a higher spirituality and to justify a nobler conception of the divine. When we examine the story we find that it is not so much a justification of its hero Job (or suffering mankind), struggling against the narrow reproof and teachings of his friends (who here typify a definite religious belief), as it is a justification of God. To the writer it seemed that God had been misrepresented, belittled by the minds and narrow creeds and beliefs of men. His glory had been tarnished, as it were, by man's handling of it. So he set himself earnestly to tell us something of what he had conceived to be God's untarnished majesty. He sets us a standard of serving God for nought save for the blessedness of serving him. Summing up the philosophy of the book, in the words of Froude, the author teaches that, "Our place is to be true to the best which we know, to seek that and do that; and if by 'virtue its own reward' be meant that the

good man cares only to continue good, desiring nothing more, then it is a true and noble saying. But if virtue be valued because it is politic, because in pursuit of it will be found most enjoyment and fewest sufferings, then it is not noble any more, and it is turning the truth of God into a lie. Let us do right, and whether happiness come or unhappiness it is no very mighty matter. If it come, life will be sweet; if it do not come, life will be bitter — bitter, not sweet, and yet to be borne. On such a theory alone is the government of this world intelligibly just. The well-being of our souls depends only on what we *are;* and nobleness of character is nothing else but steady love of good and steady scorn of evil. The government of the world is a problem while the desire of selfish enjoyment survives; and when justice is not done according to such standard (which will not be till the day after doomsday, and not then), self-loving men will still ask, Why? and find no answer. Only to those who have the heart to say, 'We can do without that; it is not what we ask or desire,' is there no secret. Man will have what he deserves, and will find what is really best for him, exactly as he honestly seeks for it. Happiness may fly away, pleasure pall or cease to be obtainable, wealth decay, friends fail or prove unkind, and fame turn to

infamy; but the power to serve God never fails, and the love of Him is never rejected."

All this the writer teaches by means of his hero Job. And the theme that rings through the whole magnificent story is just this teaching brought down to its very essence, namely, *faith.*

Job's wife, though in the beginning she knows that he has been good, when she sees him so sorely afflicted bids him curse God, and die. In other words, a God who can treat a good man like that (you see she judges God and does not trust Him) — why should one serve Him? But Job answers her mildly, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women. Shall we receive gladness at the hand of God and shall we not receive affliction?"

This is early in the story, you remember. Here, as well as in the brave reply, "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away," we find the theme of faith first given out strongly.

Then follow all the miseries and sorrows and trials and contending voices of doubt and yearning and suffering which drown the beautiful but as yet insufficient faith. But it comes back again; and stronger this time: "Though He slay me yet will I trust Him." "I know that my Redeemer [literally, my justifier] liveth."

But still the fierce struggle goes on. Job in his

misery longs to die. He leans on the faith his friends have had in him — and it breaks. They turn against him. Zophar, the most frank of them, even goes so far as to say, "God gives thee less than thy iniquity deserveth." Afflicted beyond measure, all worldly benefits gone, his friends lost to him, Job turns again (now with a kind of audacity of faith) and wishes he might argue with God Himself. He feels sure of God's justice and has firm faith in it. Then comes the climax of the story. It is God, not Job, who is vindicated. Job, though tossed and torn, has clung somehow to his faith. "I know that my Redeemer liveth." "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." This is typical of Job, and of the story. It has a familiar ring that allies it to other great souls and other great books. It recalls Bunyan's resolve in prison. Yet note, too, the difference. Bunyan's resolve was one founded on a clear vision of duty, and on courage to follow duty. He would do right, whether God stood by him or not — whether He showed him favor or not, "come Heaven, come Hell!" that is clear resolution and courage. But Job's resolve is a higher thing still.

For not only will he do his duty and preserve his integrity, not only has he the courage, as Bunyan had, to do this, but he goes further. He

will love God, no matter how God treats him, for he has that higher form of courage which we call trust, *faith*. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."

We are used to the idea that we cannot escape from God. Here the author, with splendid daring and touching assurance, shows us that God cannot escape from us. Let God do what He will, we will hold fast to Him. As Jacob with the messenger of God, Job has wrestled with the afflictions, the sufferings, the doubts visited on him, and his cry has been at last that of Jacob and of every strong and earnest soul that ever fought in mortal frailty with great spiritual powers: "I will not let thee go except thou bless me!"

And so at last the blessing comes not by a justification of himself, — when it comes it is the blessing of greater faith. Job is a changed man. The prosperous, virtuous Job of the beginning of the story is a different man, indeed, from the Job who has suffered and through that suffering has conquered his doubts, and has established his faith.

THE STRONG HUMAN APPEAL OF THE BOOK

And the strong human appeal of the book? It is just that — faith. We are wont to hear much of

the great patience of Job — as "patient as Job," we say; yet one cannot read this great book carefully without realizing that it is rather Job's faith that is his towering spiritual quality. It is faith that Job obtains, faith that the book describes, faith that the book teaches, faith that it instills and inspires. For reading of Job's faith our own flames a little brighter, the dignity and beauty of his trust in God add somewhat to our trust. He teaches us to see further than outward evidence, shows us how to look beyond not only narrow creed and dogma, but beyond the most fearful fate that life can bestow on us, — to a vision of an All-wise Providence; a vision of faith it is — faith which we are told is "the substance of things *hoped* for, the evidence of things *not seen*."

CHAPTER XII

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

While it is hoped that the general plan of study followed in the foregoing chapters may be of use in helping the earnest reader or student better to grasp the meanings of the great books there dealt with, it is hoped, also, that not the letter, but the spirit of it, rather, will be adopted. For were the plan here suggested carried out too literally, it is not unlikely that the over-earnest student, while seeking in a great book for repeated evidence of any particular message it may bear, might lose much of the grander and larger beauty of the work.

Those who seek to find ore in a mountain will need, no doubt, to bore into certain sections of it and to examine closely certain parts of its soil, to determine where and of what quality the ore may be. But by those who hope to realize the distinctive beauty and outline and majesty of the mountain, a more distant and comprehensive view must be had. The student who delves too persistently in a great book for hidden or suspected meanings may find precious ore, but

also he will lose much of the inspiration to be had from a more general study and comprehensive view of his subject.

In "Faust" Goethe has made the character of Wagner, Faust's "famulus," — that is his assistant or servitor in his laboratory, — to represent that literal type of student, that exact letter-of-the-law person, who, in too exact and literal study, loses the grander meanings of life. Goethe has contrasted this character strongly with that of Faust. Faust by means of his magic has summoned the Earth-Spirit, and, well-nigh overwhelmed by the magnificent and awful presence, addresses it. Wagner, meantime, having heard the sound of Faust's voice, comes in dressing-gown and nightcap, candle in hand, and knocks at Faust's study door. The magnificent interview is interrupted. Faust, hearing the knock, turns impatiently:

> O death! — I know it — 't is my famulus —
>
> . . . . . .
>
> That all these visionary shapes
> A soulless groveller should banish thus!

One needs not be told that the glorious Earth-Spirit vanishes. Wagner enters. He had heard, he says, some declamation. He thought Faust might be reading a Greek tragedy. He himself craves some preparation in the art of oratory,

etc. He is always following Faust about, hoping to add to his hoarded store of dry knowledge some that he believes may be gained from the great man.

Also in the Easter morning scene where Faust and Wagner walk abroad together, the contrast of the two natures is finely shown. Faust is touched, inspired by the glory of the spring, and touched, too, by the pleasure of the Easter merrymakers. Here is one of the finest passages in the book, quoted here only in part: —

Released from ice are brook and river
By the quickening glance of the gracious Spring;
The colors of hope to the valley cling,
And weak old Winter himself must shiver,
Withdrawn to the mountains, a crownless king:
Whence, ever retreating, he sends again
Impotent showers of sleet that darkle
In belts across the green o' the plain.
But the sun will permit no white to sparkle;
Everywhere form in development moveth;
He will brighten the world with tints he loveth,
And, lacking blossoms, blue, yellow, and red,
He takes these gaudy people instead.
Turn thee about, and from this height
Back on the town direct thy sight.
Out of the hollow, gloomy gate,
The motley throngs come forth elate:
Each will the joy of the sunshine hoard,
To honor the Day of the Risen Lord!

There follows a further description of the motley throngs. Faust takes pleasure in the very colors of their clothes, yet sees the entire scene from a height and grasps its greater meaning.

Meanwhile we hear the voice of Wagner, — Wagner bent on erudition, bent on getting from association with this great Faust some credit for learning; Wagner, who likes to dissect and pull apart to find their meanings Faust's least remarks.

> To stroll with you, Sir Doctor, flatters;
> 'T is honor, profit unto me.

The merrymakers make much of Faust, honor and revere him. Their reverence Faust takes with simple friendly gratitude. Wagner remarks how pleasant it must be to be so honored. They stroll on farther and higher up the ascent. Faust longs not for that which flatters or honors himself. He longs rather for power to see things not in mere detail; he wants to see them *whole*. He longs for a broader understanding. While Wagner's desire for knowledge stays close to the earth, Faust's longings for broader knowledge and wisdom soar. Had he but wings to lift him from the soil, that he might follow on the very track of the departing day itself! This he cannot do, but he pictures what it might be had

he the power. In imagination he sees the whole world spread out before him: —

Then would I see eternal Evening gild
The silent world beneath me glowing,
On fire each mountain-peak, with peace each valley filled,
The silver brook to golden rivers flowing;
The mountain-chain, with all its gorges deep,
Would then no more impede my godlike motion;
And now before mine eyes expands the ocean
With all its bays, in shining sleep!
Yet, finally, the weary god is sinking;
The new-born impulse fires my mind, —
I hasten on, his beams eternal drinking,
The Day before me and the Night behind,
Above me heaven unfurled, the floor of waves beneath me, —
A glorious dream! though now the glories fade,
Alas! the wings that lift the mind no aid
Of wings to lift the body can bequeath me.
Yet in each soul is born the pleasure
Of yearning onward, upward and away,
When o'er our heads, lost in the vaulted azure
The lark sends down his flickering lay, —
When over crags and piny highlands
The poising eagle slowly soars,
And over plains and lakes and islands
The crane sails by to other shores.

The two characters of Faust and Wagner might be used as parables, almost, to illustrate the value of a broad-minded and more general study of great books as contrasted with a nar-

row and too detailed, limited, and over-zealous dissection of them.

It is without doubt most important that we should bring to the study of great works some of that wider vision, that sense of completeness, that aspiration after broader knowledge which characterize Faust. It is of more value, for instance, for us to realize the amazing scope of "Don Quixote," the big scale of it, until the story seems more like a vast country than a book, than for us to wander here and there narrowly in it, seeking for detailed evidence which shall enable us to determine just what truth Cervantes meant to convey by the madness of his mad hero. It is very much more important for us to have got some glimpse of the wide expanse of the "Odyssey," for us to have heard the "surge and thunder" of it "like ocean on a western beach," than for us to be able to point out that the stories of Penelope and Ulysses are well matched in theme.

Keats's sonnet on Chapman's translation of Homer pictures for us admirably that exploring and reverent attitude of mind, that large and comprehensive vision, that wonder and surprise of the intellect and the soul which we should bring to the discovery and reading of all great books. Keats had known many books, he tells

us; had traveled much "in the realms of gold," as he puts it. He had seen many goodly states and kingdoms of the poets. He had oft been told, too, of that wide demesne ruled over by Homer; but until the volumes of Chapman came to his hands never had he breathed the pure serene air of that realm. But then, — *then* —

> Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
> When a new planet swims into his ken;
> Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
> He stared at the Pacific — and all his men
> Looked at each other with a wild surmise —
> Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

It is this larger, more comprehensive view from high up that I would urge as the *first* vision, for all students; to get the vast sweep of the "Pacific" as from a height *first*, however much one may later explore the lesser bays and shallows; or refresh one's self in its changing tides.

The writer would urge again that the foregoing essays are intended to be merely suggestions and in no sense dogmatic. Countless able commentators have studied these seven books long and ably, and by no such method. In Bayard Taylor's introduction and notes to his magnificent translation of "Faust," and in Longfellow's copious notes and comments on the "Divine Comedy," you will find, for instance, no

hint of such interpretations as are mentioned in this volume. Able students of Homer might insist that while patience and endurance are strongly drawn in the "Odyssey," so also are other great human traits; that, while justice might seem to be especially dwelt on in the "Divine Comedy," love and pity are there set out with almost equal insistence.

All this is quite true; but the objection is answered, perhaps, by the assertion that the writer has no desire to foist on any one the present plan of study. It is set out merely as suggestive and with the hope that it may perhaps render somewhat more clear to the minds of many some of the inexhaustible beauty and meaning contained in all great books.

CHAPTER XIII

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

LIFE cannot rightly be understood by any of us without the help of those older or wiser than ourselves, who, before we came to its problems, have already studied it deeply and given it their earnest thought. In much the same way the great books of the world cannot be rightly understood nor their full meaning grasped by us readily or easily. There will be needed the comment and wisdom of those who are wiser than ourselves in these matters.

Let us assume that those who have in the foregoing pages read the brief résumés of the seven great books now turn to any one of the books themselves.

It is not unlikely the average reader will find himself bewildered by the task in front of him. He finds these books difficult to read. He is balked in the beginning by dark references he does not understand; classic or covert allusions of which he is ignorant; symbols he cannot interpret. Thus, though he starts out hopefully, he is not unlikely soon to find himself in a kind of intellec-

tual Slough of Despond. Let him console himself, however, with this fact which all earnest students of great books readily admit: *great books are never easy reading.* Indeed, great books are like great people — the shallow and insincere rarely succeed in making friends with them. They are never popular in the superficial sense, the nobility and meanings and purposes of them cannot be discovered quickly. It is only in renewed acquaintance with them that we shall come to understand them.

As Dante himself needed Virgil, one wiser than himself as guide, to interpret for him the meanings and happenings of his famous journey, so we shall need some one more familiar with these books than ourselves to conduct us through the often difficult paths of them. It is, therefore, very strongly to be advised that the student should not attempt any study of any great books unaccompanied by a good commentary.

As the needs of each student are so individual, it is impossible to recommend for each book any one commentator who would be an adequate guide to all readers. In any case, however, it would be well to use an edition of the book studied which has good and ample notes.

If the book is read in translation, — let us suppose we are going to study the "Odyssey,"

the "Divine Comedy," and "Faust," all translated from the originals into English, — it is wise and helpful to use if possible several translations, comparing them here and there. The Cary translation of Dante, which is an exceedingly good and popular one, doubles in interest if one has at hand the able Longfellow translation and in noted passages can compare the two. Also the far more ample notes of the Longfellow translation are invaluable to supplement the Cary notes. A still better result and pleasure can be had if along with the two translations mentioned one has for quick reference the extraordinarily valuable "Readings from Dante," by William Warren Vernon. A few months spent exploring the "Divine Comedy" with these three capable and sympathetic guides could not but be richly fruitful in pleasure and benefit.

After exploring with such able commentators this great forest-like work of Dante, there will come, no doubt, the wish to go into it alone; its trees will seem to beckon and its paths to invite. For once the commentators have served their purpose; once we have "through some heavenly hospitality" got presented to the "poets in their singing robes," then begins our own friendship with them, our own personal relation to them. But it should not be forgotten that it is

a relation that cannot be forced. If we are to be friends of the great, we may not hope to presume to a cheap intimacy with them, for that the innate dignity and reserve of them forbid us.

Before we can know these great ones intimately we must know something of their lives, their times, their friends, their ideals. No one can appreciate even in a small measure Dante's love of Florence, nor that bitterness which sat in his soul, exiled from her, who does not know something of that fair city as she existed in his day; no one can appreciate even slightly Dante's loneliness who knows nothing of his friends, his associations, and the habits of his life. No one can judge of the deep sufferings, the earnest resolves, and high exaltations, which led him through his own more personal hell and purgatory and heaven, who knows nothing of the great earthly and spiritual love which led him. You may read the "Divine Comedy" from end to end, but you will hardly have come into its deeper meanings until you have met in history or biography or autobiography, — wherever you are able to find it — his deep love for one Beatrice Portinari in whose honor the great poem was avowedly written. More and more, as Dante becomes in this way a real person to us, more and more we shall enter into an understanding of his

"Divine Comedy" into which he put so much of his real self.

Let us remember these great men, not as distant or strange, not as removed from our own times, but, rather, as those who by the immortal power of their genius are yet present with us, who stand beside us here and now, closer, more real sometimes, than those who in our tricked phrases we call *living*. These great souls are living still, in the broadest and best sense of the word; and will be here long after we and our earthly associates are gone. For they are remaining and abiding presences in life, revealing themselves to all who greatly desire to know them; untouched, unaltered by all that changes or decays; for they are

> gathered to the Kings of Thought
> Who waged contention with their time's decay,
> And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

Whatever books, then, will lead us to a better knowledge of Dante the man, for instance, will be valuable reading to those who wish to take up the study of the "Divine Comedy." Such books as "Dante Alighieri," by Paget Toynbee, and "Companion to Dante," by Scartazzini, are exceedingly valuable as aids to this more intimate knowledge of the man. Dante's own works, notably the "Vita Nuova" and the "Convito,"

are obviously of inestimable value. Boccaccio's "Life of Dante," while not reckoned one of the most exact, has the great advantage of being written by one who lived near to Dante's own time.

All study of history relating to the times of the author may be said to be helpful so long as one's conception of history is a broad and not a limited one. While it were well to read the history of Dante's times to get better light on Dante, and to make him more living and real to us, it must not be forgotten that an equal benefit accrues from reading Dante to get a better light on the history of his age. For it is well to keep in mind that the poets are forever the best historians. They set before us vividly for all time certain periods of man's life and development. The "Divine Comedy" may be called *history* almost, in that it shows us so clearly man and his beliefs and surroundings and actions as they existed, combined and interrelated at a certain period.

Froude in his essay on the "Science of History" makes the same point as to Homer. Of him he says, "He sang the tale of Troy, he touched his lyre, he drained the golden beaker in the halls of men like those on whom he was conferring immortality. And thus, . . . through

Homer's power of representing men and women, those old Greeks will still stand out from amidst the darkness of the ancient world with a sharpness of outline which belongs to no period of history except the most recent. For the mere hard purposes of history, the 'Iliad' and the 'Odyssey' are the most effective books which were ever written. We see the hall of Menelaus, we see the garden of Alcinous, we see Nausicaa among her maidens on the shore, we see the mellow monarch sitting with ivory scepter in the market-place dealing out genial justice. Or, again, when the wild mood is on, we can hear the crash of the spears, the rattle of the armor as the heroes fall, and the plunging of the horses among the slain. Could we enter the palace of an old Ionian lord, we know what we should see there; we know the words in which he would address us. We could meet Hector as a friend. If we could choose a companion to spend an evening with over a fireside, it would be the man of many counsels, the husband of Penelope."

To study the great masters, then, with a large mind, as a part of those ages they interpreted, and to study those ages as an essential part of themselves, is the only adequate way of coming to know them well, and of coming to understand their message clearly. To read a great book,

then, even with a good commentary, is but to have made a beginning; is but to have entered an outer chamber of those vast treasure houses in which lie stored our inexhaustible inheritance.

CHAPTER XIV

THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GREAT BOOKS

THERE are few things more fruitful to the alert mind than a comparative study of great books. Even the more casual reader can hardly read several of the classics without becoming aware of certain marked likenesses which they bear to each other. Readers and students of all ages seem to have been aware of these likenesses. We find Leigh Hunt referring to the "Divine Comedy" as the *Italian* "Pilgrim's Progress"; Longfellow speaks of the "Pilgrim's Progress" as the *English* "Divine Comedy." Both are agreed evidently on a strong likeness between these two books. Likewise we find Goethe's "Faust" spoken of as the *German* "Divine Comedy"; and it is also not infrequently referred to as the modern Book of Job, alluding, of course, to the fact that Faust, like Job, was tested and tried for the final losing or saving of his soul.

These are likenesses obvious enough, clear to the most casual observer. But when one comes to be more deeply interested in a comparison

of great books, when one begins really to seek out their likenesses, one is often amazed at the number and variety and the clearness of these likenesses. Not only will a careful noting of them add greatly to the interest of our study, but very materially to our understanding of great books.

Taking only the seven we have selected, namely, the "Odyssey," the "Divine Comedy," "Faust," the "Arabian Nights," "Don Quixote," the "Pilgrim's Progress," and the Book of Job, we find that all of them are constructed on the same ground-plan, as it were. Each sets out the history of a soul which progresses from lesser to greater, from worse to better, from unhappiness to happiness. Or to particularize: The "Odyssey" sets out the history of a man who progresses by means of endurance from separation and exile to reunion and homecoming; the "Divine Comedy" tells of a man who progresses from sin and wretchedness ("hell") to goodness and bliss ("heaven"); "Faust," of a man who progresses by way of self-sacrifice from a kind of damning discontent to happiness and salvation; the "Arabian Nights" of a woman who progresses by way of ingenuity from a dire doom to happiness and honor; "Don Quixote," of one who by way of sometimes sorrowful, generally

humorous, mostly pitiful, adventure, progresses from madness and delusion to sanity and truth; the "Pilgrim's Progress," of one who by sheer determined courage progresses from misery and the City of Destruction to salvation and the company of the Blessed; the Book of Job, of one who, by means of trial, or chance, or God (as you may choose to believe the story as allegory or truth), progresses from a shallow, untried service to God, first to doubt and then through doubt to a noble and triumphing faith.

The great writers and their great books are all agreed on this, this common fact of life, that man *progresses*. They have each in their own way testified to it, solemnly sworn to it, as it were, and lent their hand and seal to it.

This is neither the time nor place to draw conclusions; it is enough, no doubt, to draw attention to these significant facts. Whatever you or I or any of the rest of the lesser "very miscellaneous and dusty company" may think, the great ones of the earth, the poets "in their singing robes," have testified to *this*, have spoken thus and not otherwise.

Not less interesting, hardly less significant, is the fact that in four out of the seven the hero makes a journey. Ulysses, Dante, Don Quixote, Christian, these all go on journeys.

In all of the books, without exception, some definite form of superstition is evident. In the "Odyssey" we find strange creatures, part bird, part woman; curious monsters of sea and land; in the "Divine Comedy," vast unhuman shapes, too many to mention here; in "Faust," Job, and "Pilgrim's Progress," a visible personal devil; in the "Arabian Nights," jinns and genii and fairies; in "Don Quixote," though the unhuman forms are not actually present to the eye, they haunt nevertheless the fancy of Don Quixote, — giants, enchanters, evil spirits.

In the "Odyssey," "Divine Comedy," "Faust," "Pilgrim's Progress," and the Book of Job alike, is represented the "Land of the Dead," varying only in form, not in general or essential fact. Ulysses descends to the "Shades." Dante enters also the Land of Departed Spirits, but the idea is here gothicized — the Land of Spirits is divided into three carefully subdivided worlds, and to these are given the names of "hell," "purgatory," "heaven." The "Prologue" to "Faust" shows us "God in his heaven." In the last scene Faust is carried to the "heaven" of the redeemed, where Margaret has gone long before and awaits him. In the "Pilgrim's Progress" Christian attains to the Celestial City and sees there the spirits of the blessed; in Job

God's heaven and his angels, a Personal God, interested personally in man, are revealed to us at the beginning of the story.

In four out of the seven we see a soul conscious of sin or danger, and longing to be saved. In the "Divine Comedy," Dante, confronted in the woods by the beasts and longing to escape, knows not what to do or where to turn — to flee; Faust longs to know what to do to save himself from wretchedness and escape the disgust of living; Sheherazade knows she is doomed if she cannot stay the king's displeasure; Christian becomes convicted of sin and mourns, begging to know what he must do to be saved.

When one looks for less obvious and more subtle likenesses, there do not lack examples in plenty. Bunyan's description of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, for instance, with its fearful noises and moans, its clanking of chains, its complaints of souls in misery, recalls strongly Dante's inferno. Dante's journey to the abode of the dead recalls certain instances in Ulysses' visit to the Land of the Shades. Here the likenesses are often very striking.

The Interpreter's House in the "Pilgrim's Progress," with punishments shown by the Interpreter and the lessons taught by the souls of those who are there punished, recalls Virgil

interpreting to Dante the meanings of the various torments in the inferno, and the lost souls themselves recounting their sins.

The Court Masquerade in the Second Part of "Faust" reminds one vividly of the Great Fair in the Town of Vanity in the "Pilgrim's Progress."

Christian, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," putting his fingers in his ears so as not to hear when his wife and children cry after him, lest he be weakened in his resolves, recalls clearly Ulysses dulling his companions' ears and having himself bound to the mast with cords lest he yield to the voices of the sirens.

Christian and Faithful, grown drowsy on the Enchanted Ground in "Pilgrim's Progress," recall Ulysses' experience in the drowsy Land of the Lotus-Eaters.

Don Quixote's mad belief in bewitchments and enchantments reminds us in a negative way of Faust's use of magic.

In the "Odyssey" Ulysses' companions fail him; in "Pilgrim's Progress," Christian's family and neighbors fail and mock him; in the Book of Job, Job's three friends turn against him and lose faith in him.

All of the seven books, with the exception of the "Arabian Nights," is built around some strongly moral idea or view of life.

In the "Odyssey" and in the Book of Job the hero is afflicted by misfortunes which seem arbitrary and unjust. In the "Odyssey" we have not only Athena's defense of Ulysses' piety and her complaint of the misfortunes visited on her hero, but we have Ulysses' nurse lamenting his undeserved suffering: —

> My heart is sad for thee, my son; and yet
> I can do nothing. Can it be that Jove
> Hates thee beyond all others? though thyself
> So reverent to the gods? No man on earth
> Has burned so many thighs of fatling beasts
> And chosen hecatombs as thou to Jove
> The Thunderer, with prayer that thou mayst reach
> A calm old age, and rear thy glorious son
> To manhood; yet the god hath cut thee off
> From thy return forever.

In the Book of Job we have the author's assurance early in the story that Job was a perfect and upright man, "one that feared God and eschewed evil." We have also Job's bitter laments, and in the thirty-first chapter his noble summing up of his integrity: —

> If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit;
> Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity.

Yet on this just man, as on Ulysses, have been visited sorrow and calamity.

There is in each of these poems a persistent questioning of the dealings of God, or the gods, and a haunting longing, in which the reader shares, that the integrity of these men shall be admitted by the Higher Powers. The likeness is very striking.

These are only a few of the noticeable similarities to be found in the books named when these books are compared.

There are a few things, such as man's progress and power of overcoming, on which all these great authors agree. These, it would seem, they take to be great fundamentals. It is as though they were all convinced of some indisputable truth and said it for us, interpreted it merely each in his own fashion.

On many other things, too, they are, if not all, yet nearly all, severally agreed.

It is as though certain striking facts or characteristics of life had made strong impressions on these men whose delight and chief interest it was closely to observe life.

That the form of a journey, for instance, should have been so readily adopted by Homer, Dante, Cervantes, Bunyan would seem to point to the likelihood that the constant changefulness of man's life, its changing adventure, its years that depart and decay and alter, its unstable for-

tunes and inevitable circumstances strongly impressed these four writers so that life, when they came to write of it, took on the form and symbol of a journey, a thing that progresses and alters.

In a like manner the fact that all have made their heroes a prey to the powers of superstitions and enchantments, stranger creatures and forces uncomprehended, would seem to be a common confession among these writers that they had observed and watched those vast powers of nature and of the spirit, so little understood; those great forces, outside himself, which mysteriously influence, interrupt, hasten, or delay man's best or least efforts. When these writers, observing man and his life, took note of the smallness of man's powers as against the powers of nature, observed the limit of his lighted knowledge as compared with the vast dark of his ignorance, they must have sought aid of imagination to picture these things in some of those strange forms, half-symbolic, half-believed in,— harpies, jinns, magic, devils, powerful enchanters, and the rest.

When remembering with how much awe and wonder these great writers must have observed the visible sensible experience of death, the greatest of all man's material experiences, it is

little to be wondered at that we find them all writing of it, and allowing their heroes to visit the Land of the Dead. And since the sharp changes wrought by death are in no way to be accounted for either by a man's experience or his reason, so here again speculation and imagination lent their busy hands to picture some desirable or hoped-for substitute for the hopeless facts. So were built up these pictures of the "Shades," the Elysian Fields, the Land of Departed Spirits, the hell and purgatory and heaven of Dante, the Celestial City, with its glories and its melodious noise of music and running waters, in which those who by death were so lost to us might be recovered and cherished and spoken with as of old. Not only the observation of these writers, but how long an experience and how much longing of the race lie inwoven with these symbols of hope and promise.

So, too, the longing to escape from a dire fate — a thing noted in four of these great books — is but an interpretation of that deep self-consciousness to which man is humanly subject; that consciousness whereby he compares his actions with his ideals, his desires with his belief, his failures with his obligations; and so becomes "convicted of sin," as we say, and desirous of better living. Bunyan makes his hero voice and

interpret the whole great human longing in those few words of Christian uttered with what poignant sincerity, "What must I do to be saved?"

As a further instance, the Enchanted Ground, and the Land of the Lotus-Eaters, Ulysses resisting the sirens, and Christian stopping his ears against the appealing and detaining voices of those he loves, are what else but so many ways of picturing that common weakness of the flesh and the temptation of it with which the spirits of all men at some time struggle?

And if in the instances above we see our own weaknesses poetically and justly drawn, we see, too, that common sorrowful thing, the weakness of our companions and friends in the companions and friends of Ulysses, of Christian, and of Job, failing them in extremity.

In the point powerfully taken by Homer and the author of the Book of Job — that their heroes are just men direfully afflicted — we see two great minds strongly impressed by a common and puzzling human fact which you and I, too, may have observed frequently, that the wicked are often seen to prosper and the good to suffer.

One might cite many other examples. The longer one studies the great writers, the more one becomes aware of striking or subtle similarities.

One thing is especially important for us to observe — that these similarities are not due, as we might at first suppose, to a mere likeness of thought or likeness of temperament in these men, a kind of fellowship which marked them all of one intellectual brotherhood. It is important that we should know that these likenesses are due rather to this, that these men all drew their knowledge from one source, from life itself — human existence itself.

This brings us back to the reassuring realization that great art is but a form of life after all; — that it is touched, as life is, with our glories and our infirmities, acquainted with our grief; sharer of our knowledge, shot through with our joys and triumphs, — a thing fashioned of and for the spirits of us ("for these are spiritual utterances, and are spiritually discerned"); and therefore not a privilege of the few but the possession of the many, not the exclusive gift of the kings and nobles of the earth, but the inestimable treasure, also, of the humble.

THE END

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

LIST OF BOOKS HELPFUL IN A STUDY OF GREAT BOOKS

Each year sees some new volumes added to the already large number of commentaries on great books. The author of the present volume makes no claim that the lists given below are in any way complete. They contain the names of the editions, commentaries, essays, and such collateral reading as the author has found helpful in a study of the seven books treated of in the present volume. Many volumes are included in the lists which have only indirect bearing on the books studied, such as the histories of Spain and the histories of the East given in the lists for *Don Quixote* and for the *Arabian Nights*, many of the books chosen for the *Arabian Nights* list having been selected with a view to giving the student a broader knowledge of Eastern traditions and Oriental manners and customs in general. Where a book or essay seems to cast light on the nation or people to which the great book in question belongs, or on the character and times of its author, it has been included in the lists. From these it is supposed the discriminating reader will choose such as would seem especially adapted to his own general plan of study.

The lists given are graded. The simpler books and commentaries best suited to the casual student or

to the one who has made no extended previous study of literature are in each case mentioned first. The books mentioned under II, III, or IV, are in general for those who wish to take up a more thorough and extended study. In some cases the books mentioned are published abroad. Though these may be ordered through our own book-dealers, it is not possible for the author to give accurately the prices of such books.

GRADED LIST OF VOLUMES HELPFUL IN THE STUDY OF HOMER'S ODYSSEY

The * before the names of publishers in these lists indicates that the publishing house is in New York; the † indicates Boston.

I

1. The Odyssey. Translated into Blank Verse by William Cullen Bryant. †Houghton Mifflin Company. *This is perhaps the best-known and standard edition of the Odyssey in English. It has good notes.* (*Student's Edition.*)..... $1.00
2. The Odyssey. Translated into Verse by Alexander Pope. *Thomas Y. Crowell Company. *This volume generally includes Pope's Essay on Homer.* (*Many other inexpensive editions.*)..... .60
3. The Odyssey of Homer. Done into English Prose by S. H. Butcher and A. Lang. *The Macmillan Company. *This is a valuable translation, more readily understood than those in poetic meter. It is helpful to use this edition together with the Bryant or Pope translation*..... .80
4. The Odyssey. Translated by William Cowper. Everyman's Library. *E. P. Dutton & Co. *A good inexpensive edition. Should be studied in connection with a good prose translation*..... .35

5. Ulysses, a Play, by Stephen Phillips. *John Lane. *A beautiful and sympathetic rendering in drama form*..... $1.00
6. The Odyssey; an English Translation in Rhythmic Prose, by George H. Palmer. †Houghton Mifflin Company. *A valuable translation*..... 1.25
7. Homer's Odyssey, by the Rev. W. Lucas Collins, M.A. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia. *The story of the Odyssey briefly told in prose* ..... .50
8. The Odyssey; a Commentary, by Denton J. Snider. The Sigma Publishing Company, St. Louis. *A valuable commentary for beginners*..... 1.50
9. The Odyssey for Boys and Girls, by Alfred J. Church. *The Macmillan Company..... 1.70
10. Tales of Troy and Greece, by Andrew Lang. *Longmans, Green & Co..... 1.50
11. Queen of the Air, by John Ruskin. *A Study of Minerva. Helpful to an understanding of the religion and symbolism of the Greeks.* (*To be had in many inexpensive editions.*)
12. Adventures of Ulysses, by Charles Lamb, with introduction by Andrew Lang. *Longmans, Green & Co..... .50
13. Bulfinch's Age of Fable. *E. P. Dutton & Co. *A valuable reference book for mythology and legends of Greece and other lands*..... .35
14. Greek Heroes, by Charles Kingsley. †Ginn & Co. (*Student's Edition.*)..... .30
15. Gayley's Classic Myths. †Ginn & Co. *A valuable book*..... 1.50
16. Stories of the Old World, by Alfred J. Church. †Ginn & Co..... .50
17. Stories of Hellas, by Corinne Spickelmire. Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis..... 1.00

(*Nos. 8, 9, 14, 16, and 17 are all excellent books written for children, but have interest as well for grown-ups.*)

II

1. Homer, an Essay, by James Anthony Froude. Short Studies on Great Subjects. *Charles Scribner's Sons..... $1.50
2. Studies of the Greek Poets, by J. Addington Symonds. Two Volumes. *Harper & Brothers. *These volumes include an Essay on the Women of Homer*..... 3.00
3. In Greece with the Classics, by William Amory Gardner. †Little, Brown & Co. *Original translations covering a wide field of Greek literature, with a brief narrative of travel*..... 1.00
4. Charicles, Private Life of the Ancients, by Becker. *Longmans, Green & Co..... 1.00
5. Greek Literature, by R. C. Jebb. *American Book Company..... .35
6. Myths of Greece and Rome, by H. A. Guerber. *American Book Company..... 1.50

III

1. Old Greek Education, by J. P. Mahaffy. *Harper & Brothers. *An interesting account of methods of education in old Greece*..... 1.50
2. Greece (from the Coming of the Hellenes to A.D. 14), by E. S. Shuckburgh. *G. P. Putnam's Sons. *A good history for reference or serious study*..... 1.50
3. Old Greek Life, by J. P. Mahaffy. *American Book Company..... .35
4. Chapman's Translation of the Odyssey. *E. P. Dutton & Co. *One of the standard translations; but its English being that of several centuries ago, it is used nowadays rather by the earnest than the casual student*..... .70
5. A History of Ancient Greek Literature, by Gilbert Murray. *D. Appleton & Co..... 1.50

6. Life of the Ancient Greeks, by Charles B. Gulick. *D. Appleton & Co. $1.40
7. Greek Literature, by R. C. Jebb. *American Book Company ..... .35
8. Short History of Greek Literature, by W. C. Wright. *American Book Company 1.00

IV

1. Wissenborn's Homeric Life. Adapted to the Needs of American Students. *American Book Company 1.00
2. The World of Homer, by Andrew Lang. *Longmans, Green & Co. *For advanced study* 1.25
3. What the Greeks Have Done for Modern Civilization, by J. P. Mahaffy. *G. P. Putnam's Sons. *A readable and helpful book* 1.50
4. Essays on Delphi and Greek Literature, in "Shelburne Essays" (Second Series), by Paul Elmer More. *G. P. Putnam's Sons 1.25
5. Greek Studies, by Walter Pater. *The Macmillan Company. *These essays go deeply into the Greek myths and Greek ideals of beauty. For the casual student they are invaluable* 1.25
6. Art and Humanity in Homer, by W. C. Lawton. *Charles Scribner's Sons 1.50
7. Homer; an Introduction to the Iliad and Odyssey, by R. C. Jebb 1.50
8. Some Aspects of the Greek Genius, by S. H. Butcher. *The Macmillan Company 1.00
9. St. Basil on Greek Literature, by E. R. Maloney. *American Book Company ..... .75
10. Mycenean Troy, by Tolman and Scoggins. *American Book Company 1.00
11. Essays on Greek Literature, by R. Y. Tyrrell. *The Macmillan Company 1.25
12. A History of Classical Greek Literature, by J. P. Mahaffy. (With Appendix on Homer by Profes-

sor Sayce.) *The Macmillan Company. *Two volumes each*..... $1.50

13. Lectures on Greek Poetry, by J. W. Mackail. *Longmans, Green & Co..... 3.00
14. Handbook of Homeric Study, by Henry Browne. *Longmans, Green & Co..... 1.25
15. Life in the Homeric Age, by Thomas Day Seymour. *The Macmillan Co..... 2.00

COMMENTARIES, ESSAYS, ETC., USEFUL IN THE STUDY OF THE DIVINE COMEDY

I

1. The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri. Translated by Rev. Henry F. Cary. *Thomas Y. Crowell Company. *This is one of the standard translations. The above includes Rossetti's translation of Dante's "New Life."*..... .60
2. The Divine Comedy. Translated by Henry F. Cary. Everyman's Library. *E. P. Dutton & Co. .35
3. The Divine Comedy. Translated by Henry W. Longfellow. †Houghton Mifflin Company. *A good and standard edition. The copious notes in the Longfellow translation are valuable*..... 1.00
4. The Divine Comedy. Translated by Henry F. Cary. *A. L. Burt. *This includes Life of Dante*.. .50
5. The Divine Comedy; a commentary, by Denton J. Snider. The Sigma Publishing Company, St. Louis. *While not one of the accepted scholarly commentaries, yet a helpful one, in many ways well suited to beginners*..... 1.50
6. Essay on Dante, by James Russell Lowell. *A helpful essay to be found in Vol. IV, Lowell's "Literary Essays."* †Houghton Mifflin Company... 1.50
7. Dante Alighieri; His Life and Works, by Paget Toynbee. *The Macmillan Company. *A readable book by a well-known Dante writer*..... 1.50

8. Essay on Dante, in "Historical Essays and Reviews," by Mandell Creighton. *Longmans, Green & Co. *A delightful and helpful essay*..... $1.50
9. (*Other useful translations with valuable notes are those of Plumtre, and F. K. H. Hazelfoot. See also H. F. Toxer's English Commentary on the Divina Commedia.*)

II

1. The Divine Comedy. Translated by Charles Eliot Norton. †Houghton Mifflin Company. *Three volumes, set*..... 4.50
2. The Inferno, Purgatorio, and Paradiso. Edited with Translations and Notes by Arthur J. Butler. *The Macmillan Company. *A prose translation useful to study in connection with one of the good verse translations. Three volumes, each*..... 1.50
3. The Spiritual Sense of Dante's Divina Commedia, by W. T. Harris. †Houghton Mifflin Company..... 1.25
4. A Shadow of Dante, by Maria F. Rossetti. †Little, Brown & Co. *An interesting book, and one much used*..... 1.25
5. Comments on Passages in the Divine Comedy of Dante, by John Ruskin. Edited by G. P. Huntington. †Houghton Mifflin Company. *Interesting and useful*..... 1.25
6. A Companion to Dante, by Scartazzini. Translated by A. J. Butler. *The Macmillan Company. *A valuable book for the student. It considers carefully Dante's life and character as well as his writings*..... 1.50
7. Dante, by Edmund G. Gardner. Temple Primers. *E. P. Dutton & Co..... .50
8. The Vita Nuova. Rossetti Translation. Temple Edition. *E. P. Dutton & Co..... .50
9. The Banquet, by Dante Alighieri. Translated by

Philip Wicksteed. Temple Edition. *E. P. Dutton & Co..... $ .50

10. The Teachings of Dante, by Charles A. Dinsmore. †Houghton Mifflin Company..... 1.50
11. Aids to the Study of Dante, by Charles A. Dinsmore. †Houghton Mifflin Company. *A helpful book*..... 1.50
12. Dante and His Circle, by Dante G. Rossetti. †Little, Brown & Co. *A collection of poems by Dante and his friends, translated by Rossetti. The volume also includes Rossetti's translation of the "New Life."*..... 1.50
13. Essays on Dante, The Hero as Poet (in Carlyle's "Heroes and Hero-Worship"). Temple Edition. *E. P. Dutton & Co. *An interesting and well-known essay*..... .30
14. Essay on Poetry of Dante, in "Lectures on Poetry," by J. W. Mackail. *Longmans, Green & Co. *A fine chapter*..... 3.00
15. Dante Studies and Researches, by Paget Toynbee. *E. P. Dutton & Co..... 3.50

III

1. Readings on the Inferno (2 vols.); Readings on the Purgatorio (two vols.); Readings on the Paradiso (two vols.). By W. W. Vernon. *The Macmillan Company. *These volumes are exceedingly valuable for careful and detailed study of the "Divine Comedy." They have very full notes and a valuable running commentary by one of the most able of modern Dante students. Each*..... 1.50
2. Exiles of Eternity. Prisoners of Hope; In Patria. An exposition of Dante's "Divine Comedy" by John S. Carroll. *George Doran Company. *These volumes are valuable and readable. They offer to the Dante student a careful and helpful commentary. Three volumes, each*..... 2.00

3. De Monarchia of Dante. Translated by A. Henry. †Houghton Mifflin Company..... $1.25
4. The Consolation of Philosophy, by Boëthius. *E. P. Dutton & Co..... .45
5. Dante, by Edmund G. Gardner. *E. P. Dutton & Co..... .35
6. Dante, the Wayfarer. By Christopher Hare. *Baker & Taylor Company..... 1.50
7. Dante in English Literature from Chaucer to Cary. By Paget Toynbee. *The Macmillan Company..... 5.00

BOOKS HELPFUL IN THE STUDY OF GOETHE'S FAUST

I

1. Goethe's Faust. Translated by Bayard Taylor. †Houghton Mifflin Company. *A standard and excellent translation with good notes* $2.00
2. Goethe's Faust. Translated by Anne Swanwick. *The Macmillan Company. *A good translation with notes. Two volumes, each*..... .80
3. Faust. Annotated by F. H. Hedge, D.D. Part II. Translated by Miss Swanwick. *Thomas Y. Crowell Company. *A good edition, though without very full notes; useful if studied with good commentary*..... .60
4. Essay on Goethe, in "Heroes and Hero-Worship," by Thomas Carlyle. (*Many inexpensive editions.*)
5. Goethe's Faust; a Commentary by Denton J. Snider. The Sigma Publishing Company, St. Louis..... 1.50
6. Life of Goethe, by G. H. Lewes. *E. P. Dutton & Co. *A standard life of Goethe. It should be studied in connection with some of the later biographies.* .35

7. Life of Goethe, by G. H. Lewes, with Notes. Bohn Library. *The Macmillan Company. *This is a good standard edition unabridged, in two volumes, each*..... $ .80
8. Essays on Goethe, by Thomas Carlyle. (*In any good edition of Carlyle's works.*) *These essays are invaluable to the Goethe student.*
9. Faust; a prose translation by A. Hayward. Bohn Library. *The Macmillan Company..... 1.25

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1. Life of Goethe, by A. Hayward. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia. *A readable and brief study of Goethe's life*..... 1.00
2. Essay on Goethe and His Influence. In "Literary Essays," by Richard Holt Hutton. *The Macmillan Company. *A review of Lewes's "Life of Goethe." This is especially valuable if read in connection with that life*..... 2.00
3. Lecture on Goethe. In "Representative Men," by Ralph Waldo Emerson. †Houghton Mifflin Company..... 1.25
4. Goethe's Autobiography. Translated by John Oxenford. *The Macmillan Company..... .80
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6. Essays on German literature. In "Critical and Miscellaneous Essays," by Thomas Carlyle. *Helpful and inspiring, dealing with many phases of German literature. To be found in any good edition of Carlyle's works.*
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8. Correspondence between Schiller and Goethe.

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9. Travels in Italy, France, and Switzerland, by Goethe. Bohn Library. *The Macmillan Company..... .80

10. Goethe and Schiller. Their Lives and Works, including a Commentary on Goethe's "Faust," by Hjalmar H. Boyesen. *Charles Scribner's Sons. *Interesting and helpful essays*..... 2.00

11. Life and Times of Goethe, by Herman Grimm. †Little, Brown & Co. *One of the good biographies of Goethe* 1.25

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1. Goethe's Faust. Both parts and Marlowe's "Dr. Faustus." Moreley's Universal Library. *E. P. Dutton & Co. *Two volumes*..... .70

2. Chapters on Goethe and Faust, in "Hours with German Classics," by Frederic H. Hedge. †Little, Brown & Co..... 1.25

3. The Life of Goethe, by Albert Bielchowsky. *G. P. Putnam's Sons. *Generally admitted to be the best life of Goethe. It is sympathetic and complete (in three volumes)*..... 6.00

4. The Story of the Renaissance, by William H. Hudson. *Cassell & Co. *Of use mainly as giving an insight into some of the forces of the Renaissance, which were moving influences in Goethe's life*.... 1.25

5. Goethe, the Man and His Character, by Joseph McCabe. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia. *An interesting book recently published* 4.00

6. Three Philosophical Poets, by George Santayana. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. *Contains essays on Dante and Goethe, valuable in a comparative study*..... 1.75

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Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., London. *This volume includes five most interesting essays on Goethe*..... $2.00

8. Goethe and His Woman Friends, by Mary C. Crawford. †Little, Brown & Co. *An account of Goethe's friendship with women, together with many interesting illustrations*..... 2.50
9. Essays on Weimar and Goethe, in "Backgrounds of Literature," by Hamilton W. Mabie. *The Outlook Publishing Company. *An interesting chapter*..... 2.00
10. Goethe's Complete Works. Bohn Library. *The Macmillan Company .....
11. The Spirit of Goethe's Faust, by W. Coupland. London.....
12. Goethe's Faust. The plan and purpose of the completed work. Vanderbilt University. Quarterly, October, 1901. *A valuable essay* .....
13. Faust, edited in two volumes by Calvin Thomas. Boston. This edition is valuable for its fine introduction and notes.....

BOOKS USEFUL TO A STUDY OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

I

1. The Arabian Nights. Translated by E. W. Lane. Edited by S. Lane Poole. *The Macmillan Company. *The Lane translation is the best known and best adapted for general use. It is published in several good editions. The above edition is a very good one for general use, and contains an interesting introduction and valuable notes. In four volumes, each*..... $1.00
2. The Arabian Nights. Lane's Version. In Ariel Booklets. *Six volumes, each*..... .75

3. The Arabian Nights, retold by Laurence Housman, with drawings, by Edmund Dulac. *George H. Doran Company, New York. *A book for children. Delightful edition, of interest to grown-ups as well* $2.00
4. The Arabian Nights. *Thomas Y. Crowell Company. *A good selection of the "Arabian Nights" Stories, intended for general use* ..... .60
5. The Arabian Nights. Selected and edited by Andrew Lang. *Longmans, Green & Co. *A good popular selection* 2.00
6. Story of the Saracens, by Arthur Gilman. * G. P. Putnam's Sons. *This book gives one a good idea of many Eastern customs and historical events, useful to the understanding of Eastern literature* 1.00
7. Lalla Rookh, by Thomas Moore. (*In any complete edition of Moore's poetical works.*) *Thomas Y. Crowell Company. *The notes are valuable and interesting* ..... .75
8. Bride of Abydos, Lara, The Corsair, by Lord Byron. (*In any complete edition of Byron's poetical works.*)
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10. Sohrab and Rustum, by Matthew Arnold. (*In any complete edition of Arnold's poetical works.*) Riverside Literature Series. †Houghton Mifflin Company ..... .25

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1. Literary History of the Arabs, by Reynolds Nicholson. T. Fisher Unwin, London. *An interesting book* .....
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Poole. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., London.....

4. The Flight of a Tartar Tribe, by Thomas De Quincey. (*In any good edition of De Quincey's works.*) *A famous essay; while it treats of a different people of the East, it is valuable and inspiring.*
5. Mohammed, in Carlyle's "Heroes and Hero-Worship." *Thomas Y. Crowell Company..... $ .35
6. The Arabian Nights. Household Edition. *E. P. Dutton & Co..... 2.00
7. Arabian Wisdom, by Wortabet. *E. P. Dutton & Co..... .40
8. The Story of Persia, by S. G. W. Benjamin. *G. P. Putnam's Sons..... 1.00

III

1. Asiatic Studies, Religious and Social, by Sir Alfred Lyall. John Murray, London. *Valuable and interesting*.....
2. Thibetan Tales, by Anton von Schiefner. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., London. *These tales are allied to many found in the "Arabian Nights."*.....
3. Folk-Tales of Kasmir, by Rev. J. Hinton Knowles. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., London.....
4. Arabian Society in the Middle Ages, by Edward W. Lane. Edited by Stanley Lane Poole. Chatto & Windus, London. *Valuable*.....
5. The Penetration of Arabia, by David Hogarth. *Frederick A. Stokes Company..... 2.00
6. Rise and Fall of the Saracen Empire. In chapters 50, 51, and 52 of Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." (*Many editions.*) *These chapters are valuable and interesting.*
7. Lady Burton's edition of Richard Burton's Arabian Nights. Walter Low & Sons, London.....

8. Ferishtah's Fancies, by Robert Browning. (*In complete edition of Browning's poetical works. Student's Edition.*) †Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.00
9. Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám. Translated by Edward FitzGerald. *In many inexpensive editions* .....
10. Translation of Arabian Nights, by Richard Burton. *In fourteen volumes* 25.00
11. Essay on Arabian Poetry, in "Lectures on Poetry," by J. W. Mackail. *Longmans, Green & Company 3.00
12. Tales of the Caliphs, by Claude Field. *E. P. Dutton & Co..... 1.00
13. The Iliad of the East. A selection of legends drawn from the Sanskrit Poem "The Ramayana," by Frederika Macdonald. *John Lane.. 2.00
14. Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al Madinah and Meccah, by Sir R. F. Burton. Bohn Library. *The Macmillan Company..... 1.25
15. The Koran. *Everyman's Library. *E. P. Dutton & Co..... .35
16. Life of Mahomet, by Washington Irving. Bohn Library. *The Macmillan Company..... 1.00
17. Tales of the Genii. Translated from the Persian by Sir Charles Morell. Bohn Library. *The Macmillan Company..... 1.00
18. Essay on Persian Poetry by Emerson, in his "Letters and Social Aims." †Houghton Mifflin Company. *Centenary Edition*..... 1.75
Little Classic Edition..... 1.25
19. The Story of Mediæval India under Mohammedan Rule, by Stanley Lane Poole. *G. P. Putnam's Sons..... .75
20. The Story of Turkey, by Stanley Lane Poole. *G. P. Putnam's Sons..... 1.75

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1. Don Quixote. Translated by Motteaux, with Lockhart's Life and Notes. Bohn Library. *The Macmillan Company. *This is generally accepted as the standard translation. Two volumes each.* $1.25
2. Don Quixote. Illustrated by W. H. Robinson. *E. P. Dutton & Co. *Two volumes*..... 2.50
3. Don Quixote. Unillustrated. Everyman's Library. *E. P. Dutton & Co. *Two volumes*... 1.40
4. Don Quixote. Translated by Robinson Smith. *E. P. Dutton & Co..... 3.50
5. Don Quixote. Translated by Jarvis. *E. P. Dutton & Co. *Two volumes*..... .70
6. Don Quixote. Translated by Ormsby, with introduction and notes. *Thomas Y. Crowell Company. *Valuable*..... 1.25
7. The Story of Don Quixote. Retold for Children by Judge Parry. Illustrated by Walter Crane. Blackie & Son..... 1.50

II

1. The Life of Miguel de Cervantes, by Albert F. Calvert. *John Lane..... 1.25
2. Essay on Spanish Romance, in "Biographies and Miscellaneous Papers," by Washington Irving. Bohn Library. *The Macmillan Company..... 1.25
3. The Alhambra, by Washington Irving. (*Many editions.*)
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